

1-1-2012

# LAM: Laughing My Architecture Of

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Laughing My Architecture Off

Elizabeth Straub





## Laughing My Architecture Off

Graduate Thesis Project

Submitted to Roger Williams University, School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation

In fulfillment of the requirements of the Masters of Architecture Degree

In December 2011

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Elizabeth Straub

Class of 2012

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Stephen White

Dean

School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation

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Hasan-Uddin Khan

Thesis Professor, Advisor

School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation







## Laughing My Architecture Off

Elizabeth Straub

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Special Thanks to:

Hasan-Uddin Khan

Professor at School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation  
Thesis Preparatory Advisor, Primary Thesis Design Advisor

Alan Organschi and Lisa Gray

Visiting Professors at School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation  
Secondary Thesis Design Advisors

Greg Maughan

Founder and Executive Director of the Philadelphia Improv Theater

Roberto Viola Ochoa

Professor at School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation

...and to my family for supporting me and helping me make the little lego buildings in the site model.



"The most wasted of all days is one without laughter."

-e.e. cummings

translated to wingdings: A series of Wingdings characters used to represent the quote. The characters are arranged in three rows: Row 1: a house, a car, a gift, an exclamation mark, a foot, a question mark, a house, a flag, a checkmark, a question mark, a house, a gift, a heart, a foot, a car, a checkmark, two stars, a heart, a checkmark, a circle with a cross, a question mark, a circled i, and a question mark. Row 2: a foot, a circle, a gift, a flag, a circled i, a house, a car, a foot, a car with a heart, a house, a star, a checkmark, a car with a heart, a car, a car with a heart, a gift, an X, and a square. Row 3: a ribbon, a gift, a square, a gift, a square, a square with a heart, an exclamation mark, a circled i, a circle, a square, and a question mark.





Figure 1

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Figure 2

## Abstract

Everyone needs to be happy.  
Laughter and humor universally bring this happiness.  
Architecture can be this vessel of happiness.  
So if architecture and its contents can make people laugh,  
people will be happy.

Also this church has a face.







Figure 3

Pre-Design

Some may consider that architecture is all about the building and how the building looks, but it is always also about the inhabitants inside of it.

As humans, we are the strangest creatures on earth. Other creatures use shelter for protection from predators, and that's their only reason for shelter. We have a range of buildings for protection from other animals, but we also protect ourselves from the elements, lesser predators, each other, and any other outside force.

But our buildings are not just for shelter. We have programs and strange needs separate from our animal neighbors. From churches, to opera houses, to military bases, we have a program and a building for almost everything.



Figure 4

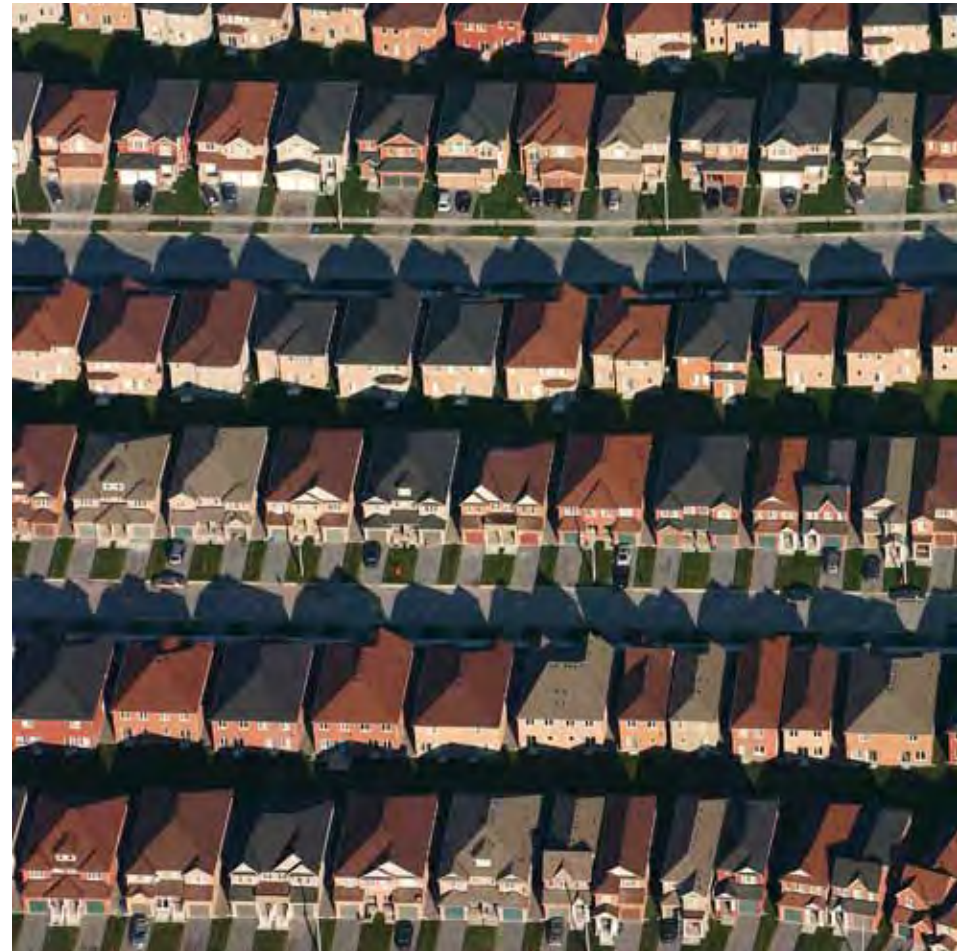


Figure 5

# Manifesto

Evolution, time and culture has sensitized us dramatically. Our meat comes in packages, we scream at the sight of a spider, and we wear clothes. Besides the scientific order, there are only a sparing amount of things that keep us within the reigns of an animal. But there is something we have kept since we separated from monkeys.

## **Raw animal emotion and interaction.**

Animals in nature fight each other for dominance. So do we. Except sometimes we use war. Animals are sad when their loved ones die. So are we. Except we have funerals. Animals feel happiness in many different ways. So do we.

There are a number of emotions that we still share with the other members of the animal kingdom. But what separated us in the first place? I believe that architecture is one of the leading factors to this desensitizing. Over time, we make monuments to our own greatness, monuments that are made for humans alone, and eventually these monuments grow in number, and we begin to form cities. This method of architecture has made us forget that we are not only like animals, but we are animals at the end of the day. Through the use of architectural knowledge and the remembrance of our own animal emotion, architecture must change to reflect the human.

If we were to ever lose this animal emotion, it would be the last thing to connect us to nature besides the fact that we live on earth. It would destroy the one thing that ties us back to our roots. It is architecture's job to keep this alive.

Architecture exists because humans went down a different path. We realized at some point that shelter is more than protection, and that the practice of building must be used to create beautiful spaces, and we did it. However, architecture can only be beautiful if it reflects the human condition, that we are indeed a very different breed of animal, yet we are still animal. Through exploitation of animal emotion, architecture can use space, and light to evoke these animal emotions that we feel. It will remind us who we are.

## **We are human.**



Figure 6



Figure 7



# Problem Statement

Too many people today are stressed, especially here in the United States. We need a unifying factor that everyone can achieve happiness and relieve stress from. Certain activities are known to reduce stress, like doing yoga or painting, but there is one thing that everyone can participate in that relieves stress, eases blood pressure, fights infection, eases digestion among many other helpful physical traits.

## Laughter.

Everyone needs humor in their lives. Humor is something that is peculiar, sarcastic, silly, absurd, or many other things. Everyone recognizes laughter and what it means because everyone has experienced laughter and can relate to it. There are different types of laughter too. There is angelic laughter, which celebrates meaning, order and truth. There is also devilish laughter, which is aimed at the misfortune of others, and there is kairotic laughter, which is broken up by force because it is producing more laughter than the body can output at once. (Noensie) Humor can only come about when humans interact with one another, which is what people need to de-stress. People who have strong, healthy relationships tend to live healthier lives and claim that they are happier than those who do not. Human relationships are essential to the human being, as it is with most animals to one another.

Humor is something that brings people of all types together, and it is something that everyone needs, whether they know it or not. Laughter therapy has been used for businesses, seniors, children, depression patients, battered women, inmates, and many other groups of people. Laughter benefits everyone through humor in architecture.

Before the 1800s, laughter and signs of it were frowned upon in art. There were few representations of laughter in this time, especially during the renaissance. Humor was something for lower classes, so the elite were not allowed to laugh. (Noensie). Luckily, we live in a world where laughter is accepted and encouraged. However, modern architecture has become too serious, sterile, impersonal, and too much about who is the coolest. Architecture is sick with seriousness, and laughter is the best medicine.

**Therefore, architecture will benefit from delivering laughter and happiness, and people will benefit from receiving it.**



Figure 8



# Problem Statement

There are many benefits from laughter and humor that I think architects, and architecture itself, has missed over the years. Humor can help not only to lift spirits, but to ease blood pressure, fight infection, and ease digestion among many other helpful physical traits. So why not incorporate this humor into architecture? It is not only people in need who need humor, but it is every human. To understand the irony and absurdity of the world, we must understand humor as well.

Milton Berle once said "Laughter is an instant vacation." Many people struggle with happiness today. Cancer patients, depression patients, alcoholics, veterans, are all struggling with their own issues. For them, laughter can be a vacation. Studies show that people who struggle with happiness often can gain it by forming groups. It is shown that people tend to be happier when in groups and when with people who can relate to their situation. (Hutton) By taking a class or seeing a show here, they can regain that happiness and make bonds with people who are bonded by laughter.

There are many types of humor: slapstick, dark humor, erotic humor, sarcasm, silly, absurd, ridiculous, cruel humor, parody, irony, satires, farce, deadpan, or more. Everyone has their own things that they find funny from all of these categories, though in today's world, irony and absurdity tend to rule.

There should be humor in the type of program that this project has, but it should also be in the very bones of the architecture and in every aspect possible. I believe that since irony and absurdity rule today's humor, that those are the humors that should be embraced.



Figure 9



Figure 10

# Project Statement

Architecture gives the perfect opportunity to join people together with humor and laughter. Through creating a space for a community of comedians to work together, this project will not only bring joy to those who come to see the acts, but also create a sense of community and home for the comedians who work and perform there.

This architecture should not only fill the needs for the program elements, but also bring a sense of wonderment and creativity to inspire those who are there. Though the building does not need to be a pun or a joke in itself, it must have a sense of playfulness and life.

There must be playfulness in the movement throughout the building, the shapes it creates, and the light that shines through it.



Figure 11

## Improv and Sketch Groups

Left: Cast of "Who's Line is it Anyway?"

Below: Cast of "Kids in the Hall"



Figure 12

## Site: City

Looking for the best city for this program, some requirements must be met. The city must be in the United States. This is because humor is different in other cultures, and being an American myself, I understand American culture and comedy better than any other culture. This means that placing the site within the United States would create the best center for comedy that I could personally design.

Another requirement is that there must be a strong comedy base within the city. This means that there are multiple improv groups, sketch groups, viral groups, stand up comedians, people with an interest in learning comedy, and a comedy culture within the city. If a city without this base were picked, there would not be enough interest in the building and it would fail. **The belief that laughter can unify people and make people happy cannot happen without people who want to make other people laugh.**

Another requirement which is more personal is that I want to be able to visit the site multiple times, so it must be somewhere that I can get to fairly easily. This may not seem like the most important thing to the project, but I feel that it is. Knowing your site is extremely important, and being able to visit it multiple times can really change your experience and the outcome of the project.

Using these requirements, **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** fits the bill quite well. First off, it is in the United States. Secondly, I can drive there in a weekend and I have people to stay with anytime. These are called 'relatives'. Thirdly, it has a great comedy base, but nowhere to gather. The list of improv, sketch, and viral groups, groups that offer classes, and stand up comedians in Philadelphia is quite long. Philadelphia also sponsors a number of comedy festivals during the summer months. All these organizations are active in the community, but there are many groups left with poor resources or nowhere to go to entertain the public.





Philadelphia

Figure 13



A child taped to a wall

Figure 14

# Site: City

Philadelphia is known for liberty, brotherly love, Rocky, and cheesesteaks, among other things.



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19



There are also four major sports teams in Philadelphia, including the Phillies (baseball), 76ers (basketball), Eagles (football), and Flyers (hockey).



Phillies

Figure 20



76ers

Figure 21



Eagles

Figure 22



Flyers

Figure 23



<b>Facts</b>	<b>Philadelphia</b>	<b>Pennsylvania</b>
Population in 2009	1,547,297	12,604,767
Population Percent Change from 2000-2009	2.0%	2.6%
Percent Female, 2009	53.2%	51.3%
Percent Male, 2009	46.8%	48.7%
Percent White, 2009	48.6%	85.2%
Percent Black, 2009	43.7%	10.9%
Percent Asian, 2009	5.7%	2.5%
Percent Hispanic, 2009	11.7%	5.1%
High School Graduates, Age 25+ in 2000	71.2%	81.9%
Bachelor's Degree or higher, Age 25+ in 2000	17.9%	22.4%
Number of Housing Units, 2000	661,575	5,518,558
Housing Units in Multi-Unit Structures, 2000	31.6%	21.2%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2000	\$59,700	\$97,000
Median household income, 2008	\$37,090	\$50,702
Per capita income, 1999	\$16,509	\$20,880
Percent of persons below poverty level, 2008	23.8%	12.1%
Persons per square mile, 2000	9,999.9	274

Figure 24

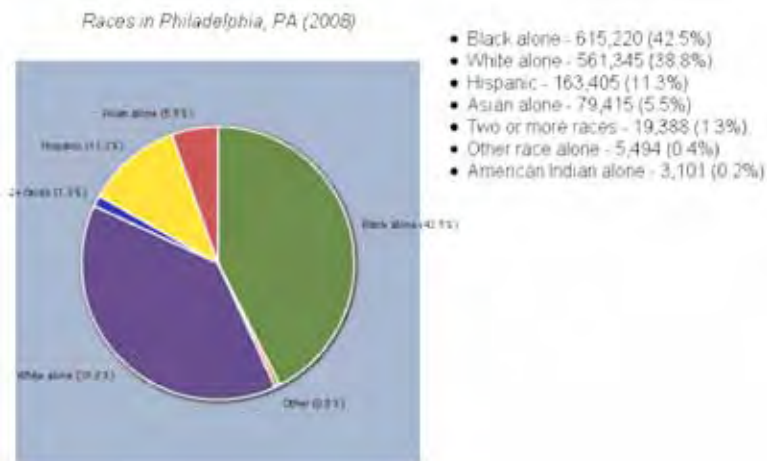


Figure 25

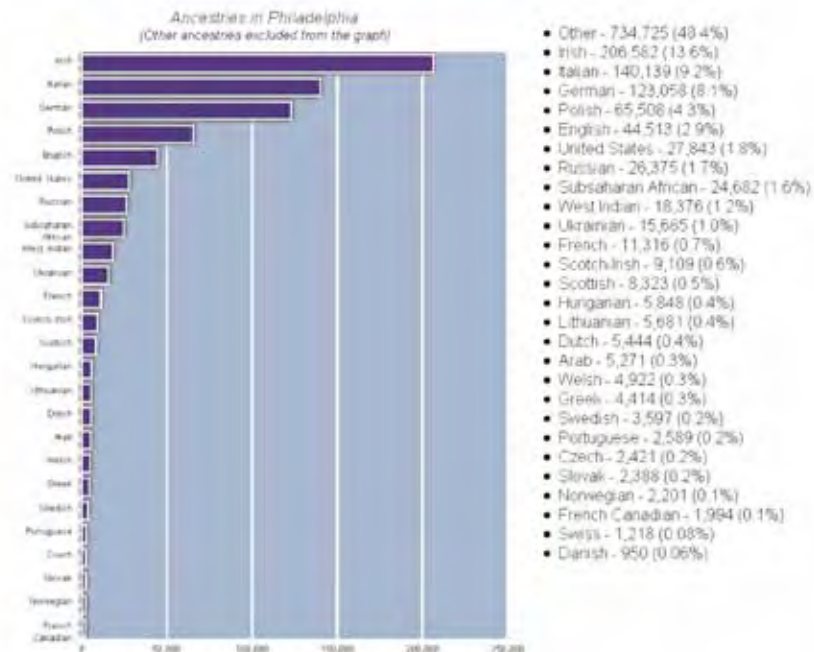


Figure 26

These statistics show how Philadelphia is much more ethnically diverse than the rest of the state. There is a much higher black population, making it the most predominant race within the city. There are also more than double the amount of Hispanics in the city than within the state. The property value, household income, and per capita income are also much lower than the rest of the state. The poverty level is also very high, which accounts for Philadelphia being accredited to being the ninth poorest city in the United States. ([praisephilly.com](http://praisephilly.com))

Philadelphia is also one of the most cancerous cities in the United States, with three major cancer centers within the city. ([cancerlinksusa.com](http://cancerlinksusa.com)) Also, despite its ethnic diversity, it is considered to be one of the most segregated cities in the United States. ([tlcnaptown.com](http://tlcnaptown.com)) Though a comedy center may not be able to lower the number of people living in poverty, heal cancer, or overcome all racial boundaries within Philadelphia, it can become one unifying outlet within the city that helps those who are troubled to feel more at ease. Laughter is a freeing experience for everyone, despite race, income, or health.

## Site: City

Pennsylvania is located in the northeastern United States. If you did not know where it is, you may want to go read a map instead of this book. Philadelphia is located in the southeast corner of Pennsylvania, and creates for a very dense region in comparison to the rest of the state. The region of Center City within Philadelphia is the best choice for many different reasons. Bordering South Philadelphia, it can be a unifying element for the black and white populations of Philadelphia.



Figure 27

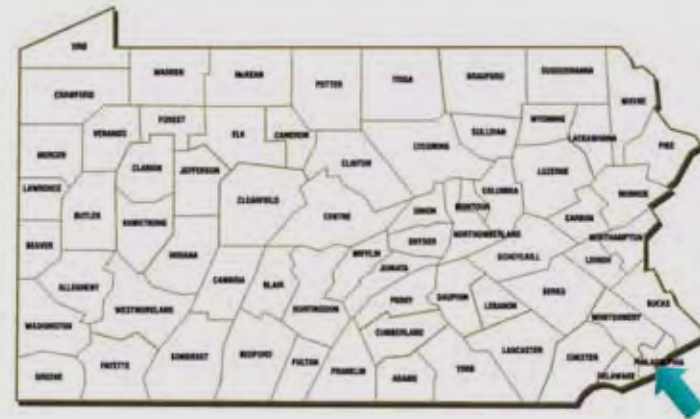


Figure 28

There is also a livelihood with in Center City that would mean the building could reach many people and could also add to the area's liveliness. However, not only must the people of Philadelphia be studied to further understand what this piece of Architecture can bring to the area, but also the weather patterns must be studied so that the building can perform to its full potential.



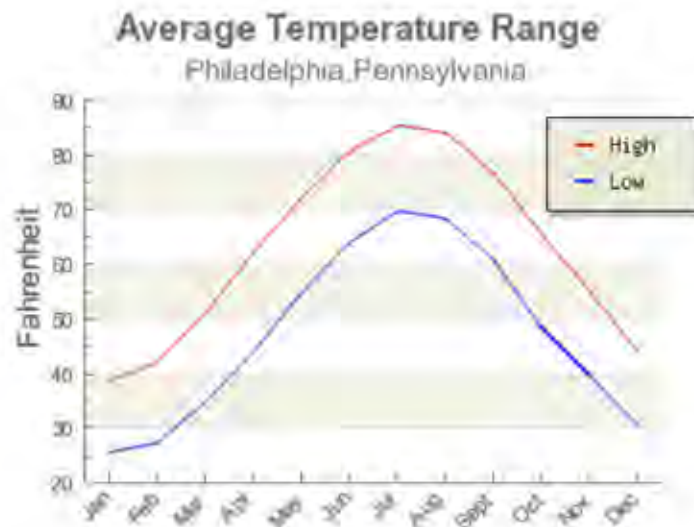
Figure 29



Figure 30

# Weather and Climate

## Average Temperature

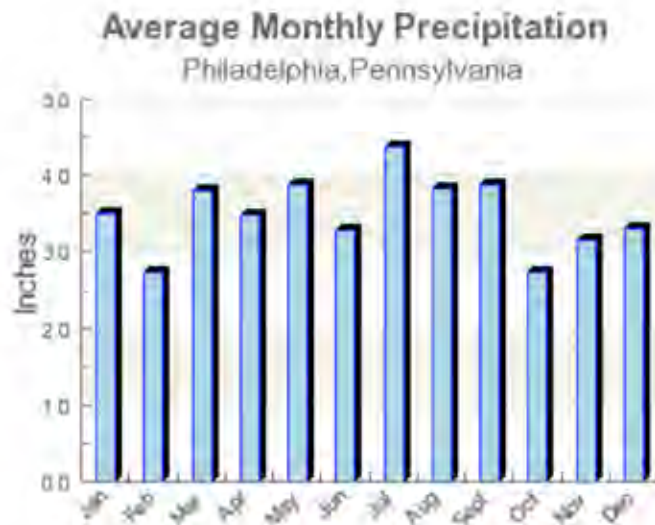


Month	Low	High
Jan	25.5°F	39.0°F
Feb	27.5°F	42.1°F
Mar	35.1°F	51.3°F
Apr	44.2°F	62.0°F
May	54.8°F	72.1°F
Jun	64.0°F	80.6°F
Jul	69.7°F	85.5°F
Aug	68.5°F	84.0°F
Sept	60.9°F	76.7°F
Oct	48.7°F	65.7°F
Nov	39.5°F	54.8°F
Dec	30.6°F	44.2°F

Figure 31

Philadelphia's coldest month is January when the average temperature overnight is 25.5°F. In July, the warmest month, the average day time temperature rises to 85.5°F.

## Average Rainfall



Month	Precipitation
Jan	3.52in.
Feb	2.74in.
Mar	3.81in.
Apr	3.49in.
May	3.88in.
Jun	3.29in.
Jul	4.39in.
Aug	3.82in.
Sept	3.88in.
Oct	2.75in.
Nov	3.16in.
Dec	3.31in.

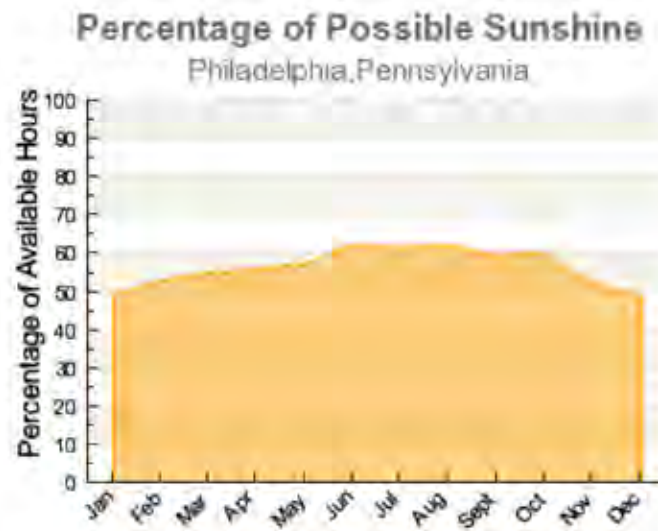
Figure 32

The driest month in Philadelphia is February with 2.74 inches of precipitation, and with 4.39 inches July is the wettest month.



# Weather and Climate

## Average Sun Exposure



Month	Sunshine Hours
Jan	49%
Feb	53%
Mar	55%
Apr	56%
May	57%
Jun	62%
Jul	61%
Aug	62%
Sept	59%
Oct	60%
Nov	52%
Dec	49%

Figure 33

Sunshine hours refers to the amount sunshine there is during the hours of daylight. A higher percentage means there is more sunshine through the day and a lower percentage will indicate that it is probably cloudier.

## Average Snowfall

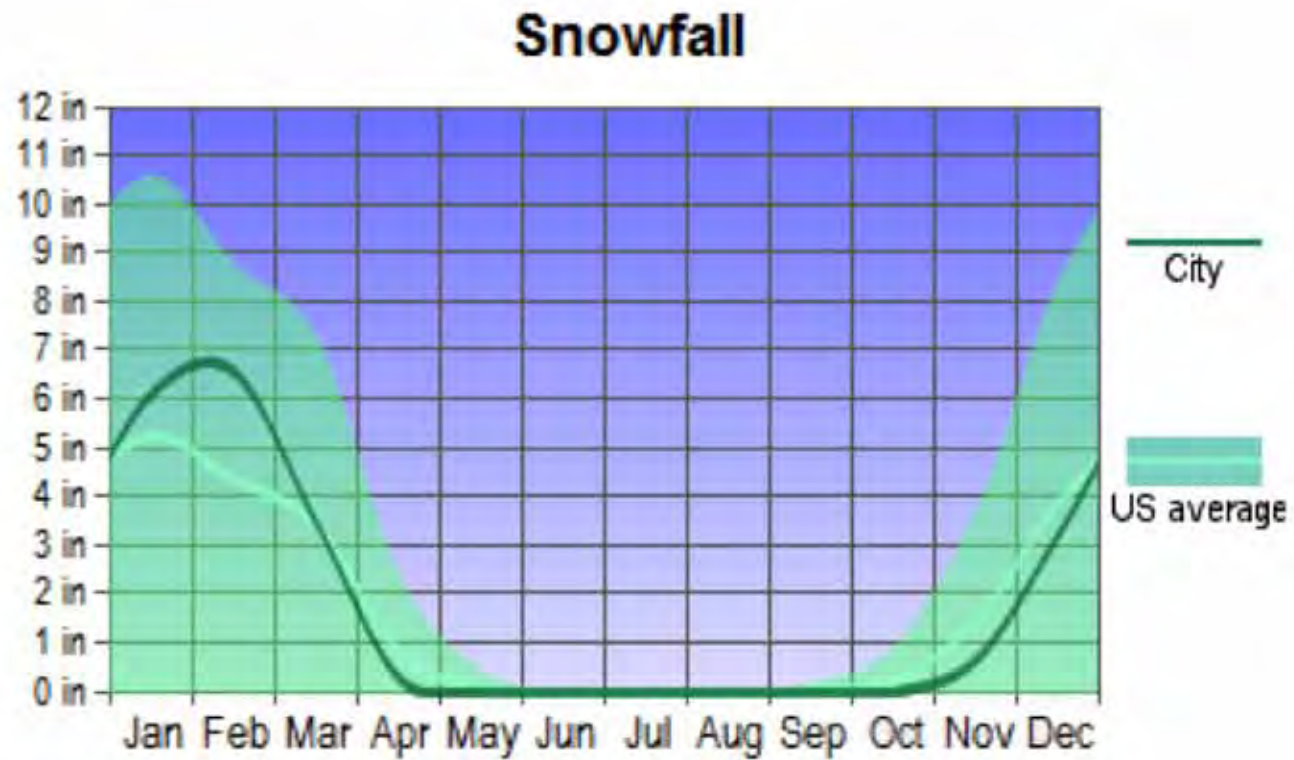
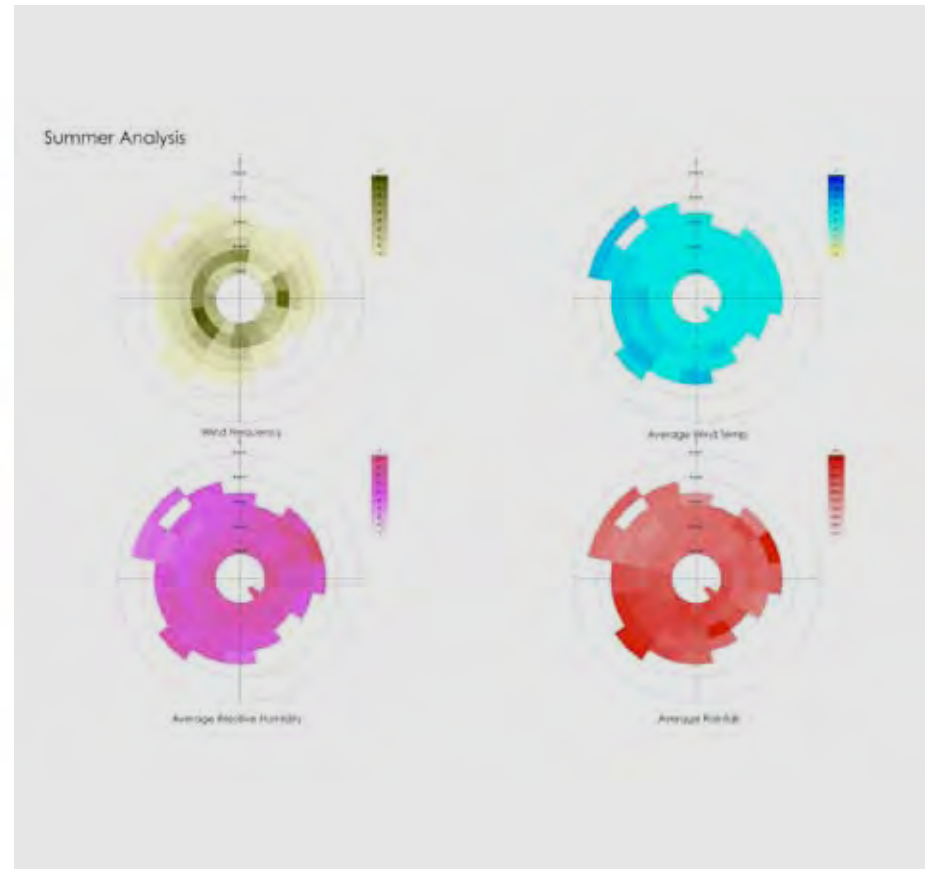
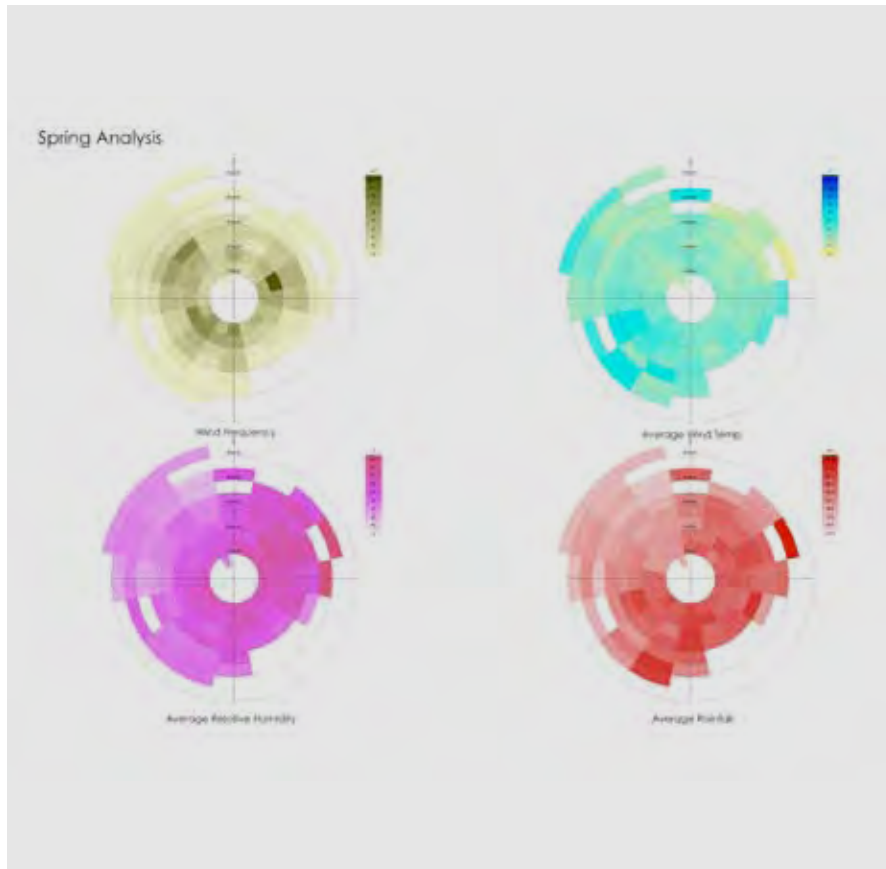


Figure 34

The city gets close to the average amount of snowfall within the United States, with some more from January to mid-March



# Weather and Climate



## Wind Frequency and Temperature:

In Philadelphia, the wind is more predominant in the west, with more during autumn and spring. There is less wind in the summer. In the autumn and spring, the wind tends to be in the 60s, with it hotter in the summer and colder in the winter.

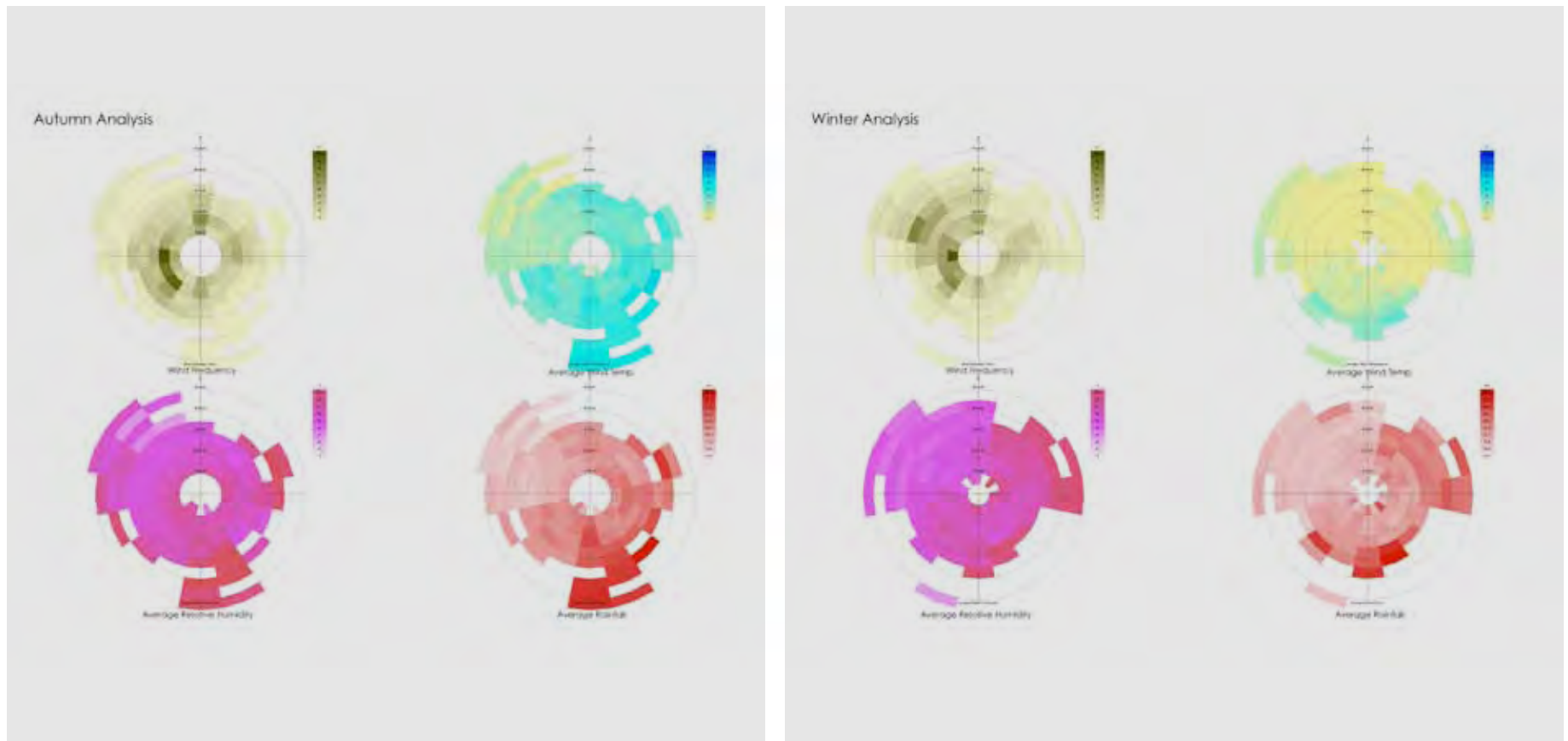


Figure 35

#### Average Relative Humidity:

There is 55% - 65% average relative humidity most of the year, with higher humidity in the autumn and winter. However, with a similar level of humidity in the summer with lesser and hotter winds, it will be the most uncomfortable then.

#### Rain:

It rains the most in the summer, though precipitation all over the year is fairly consistent.

# Weather and Climate

## Psychrometric Chart

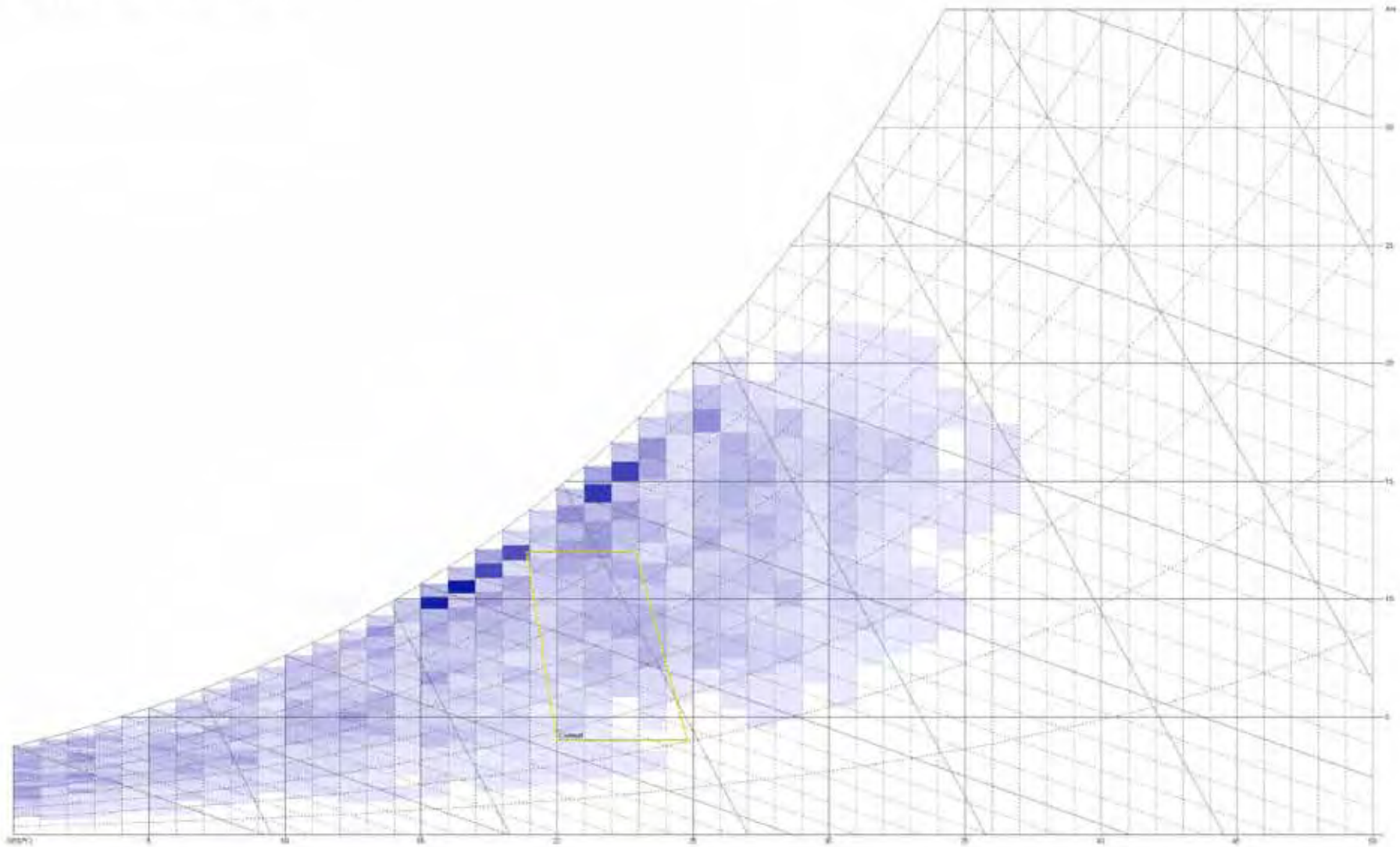


Figure 36

The yellow shape denotes the comfort zone in Philadelphia.

## Sun Charts

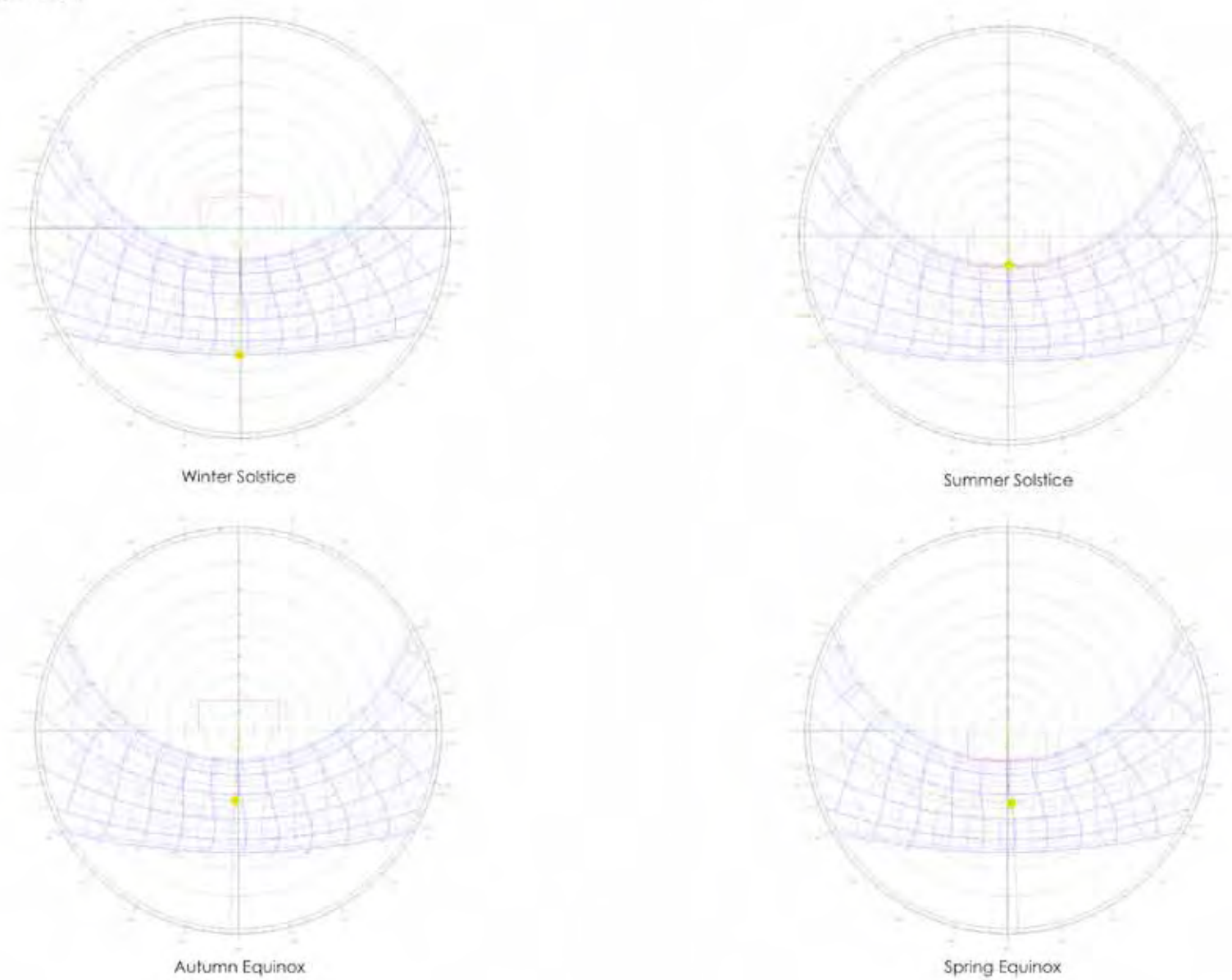


Figure 37

These charts denote the patterns of the sun at four key times during the year. They also denote the best position to take with the sun for the building with the red lines.

# Users and Client

Philadelphia has plenty of groups active with comedy, but very few spaces that are good for a place to gather and for the public to meet them. For instance, one organization, the Philadelphia Joke Initiative, which supports improv, sketch, standup, and classes, has a current sketch/improv show running and is performing it at the Latvian Society of Philadelphia, which is not exactly a place designed for comedy. ([contactpji.com](http://contactpji.com))

The Philadelphia Improv Theater (PHIT) currently works out of the Shubin Theater, which serves as venues not only to PHIT, but also dancing studios, and many other theater studios. ([phillyimprovtheater.com](http://phillyimprovtheater.com))

Improv groups like The N Crowd perform at the Actor's Center ([phillyncrowd.com](http://phillyncrowd.com)), which is a chain that is in many cities in the United States to teach people how to act and get into show business. Again it is not a place designed for comedy.

Viral groups in Philadelphia often work off site, but have expressed a need to PHIT that they would like an editing room and space to film. Sketch groups are always often looking for places to perform, and also have nowhere to properly perform. (Maughan Interview)

Many stand up comedians (local, regional, and national) perform in Philadelphia each year and also need a place to not only perform, but to have a place to go to feel integrated within the comedy community. Many of these comedians perform in hotels or in bars, but with a better venue, could perform for a larger audience. ([comedyphiladelphia.com](http://comedyphiladelphia.com))

It goes to show that there are many people willing to perform comedy in Philadelphia, but nowhere for a community to grow and a proper place to bring this comedy to the public. A place for comedians to meet and share their humor would be a great place for the laughter to spread and grow, not only amongst the people within the comedy scene, but also the people they perform for.





Figure 38



Figure 39



Figure 40



Figure 41

# Users and Client

The client for this project is the Philly Improv Theater. After contacting them, I discovered that they are in the process of trying to get a similar building built for their resources. (Maughan Interview) I have worked closely with them on this process and give them many thanks.

The Philly Improv Theater includes classes taught for improv, sketch, writing, and teen comedy. It also facilitates some of the stand up comedians that come to Philadelphia, and also works with the ones already in the city. Existing improv, sketch, and viral groups are also involved with the theater in performances and in rehearsal space. (phillyimprovtheater.com)

The users of this comedy hub would include a large variety of people involved with comedy. This includes most anyone in Philadelphia who is involved with the comedy scene. Representing performers, there would be improv groups, sketch groups, viral groups, and stand up comedians. The performers would be the ones who use the building the most, as well as teachers and directors for these groups. They would spend periods during both the day and night in the building.

Another group of users would be people who take improv or writing classes. These users would be around during the day. Administrators would also be around during the day.

Then there are those who are guests to the building to enjoy all the theatre has to offer at night. The people who do not perform or take classes there would be there to watch shows, and would be spend the least amount of time in the building.



Figure 42



# Program

The program will basically be a mixed used center for all things comedy. It will serve for a community of comedians in a place where there is great potential for comedy, but has no proper facility in a proper place to deliver it to the people who can find it the most useful. The program will have facilities for improv, sketch, and standup comedy for both large and small audiences, as well as rehearsal spaces for those same groups. However, this large and small must be taken with a grain of salt. Comedy performance spaces should not be too large, because when the energy of the performer is closer, the energy can spread through the audience, which is why even the largest theater is still considered small by most standards. (Maughan Interview)

There will also be classrooms for teaching improv, as well as for other activities. There is also be an intimate movie theatre for showings of new, old, and cult comedies. Since viral comedy is the newest frontier, there will also be spaces for those groups to film and edit their videos. Administrative offices also are needed.

The program is split into domains. There is a public, semi-public, private, and mixed domain. There are also services for mechanical and storage. The public domain is where the most people would come to visit. It has the entry and exit to the building, and would have all visitors pass through. The program within it is where performers and visitors of all kinds would come. Students would also sometimes be in the space for performances. The semi-public domain is off-limits to the general public, but the people who perform at the theater and the students would inhabit that space. The most private domain is where the viral groups would have space alone to do their work, since they need studio space which is further away from noise, and also need to have expensive equipment. The administrators would also have their offices in the private domain. The mixed domain is a number of spaces within each of the other domains. They are places where people can gather, meet, share ideas, and even perform if they want to. The storage would be accessible to performers, students, and administrators, though it may not be in one concentrated area.



Figure 43

# Program

## Public Domain (6495 sf):

**Lobby** 1700 sf (broken into program below)

*The lobby contains a number of small programmatic functions listed below that help to greet all of the people who come to the building*

**Gift Shop** 500 sf

*A place to sell merchandise to benefit the organization and the performers*

**Coat Check/Ticketing** 700 sf

**Meeting Place** 500 sf

*A place for comedians and actors to work, hang out, share ideas, and feel a sense of comedy community*

**Main Theater** 1720 sf

*The heart of the entire building, the main place to perform. Seats 122 people with rowed seating. Must be small to maintain comedic energy.*

**Green Room** 450 sf

*A soundproof room for actor's warm-ups before shows.*

**Filming Booth** 225 sf

*A booth in the back of the theater to record shows.*

**Blackbox** 1500 sf

*Secondary performance space, also used for rehearsals. No natural light is allowed, with only studio lights. Seating is temporary, movable. Seats 60. Must be small to maintain comedic energy.*

**Green Room** 450 sf

*A soundproof room for actor's warm-ups before shows.*

**Bathrooms** 450 sf

*Women require 3 water closets, men require 2 water closets by occupancy.*

## Semi-Public Domain (3450 sf):

**Rehearsal Rooms (4)** 300 sf each x 4 = 1200 sf

*Rooms for group rehearsal, individual rehearsal, classes to be taught, also rentable to outside parties if needed. They must be small to maintain comedic energy.*

**Writing Classroom                      600 sf**

*Room for teaching sketch comedy writing. Also could be used for group meetings.*

**Student Lounge                      300 sf**

**Viral Film Studio                      600 sf**

*A room for viral groups to use sets and film for their viral video use, contains a green screen.*

**Editing Room                      300 sf**

*Fits 6 computers for editing of viral films.*

**Bathrooms                      450 sf**

*Women require 3 water closets, men require 2 water closets by occupancy.*

**Private Domain (1280 sf):**

**Offices (4)                      120 sf each x 4 = 480 sf**

*Two offices for administrative staff and one for special groups*

**Conference Room                      600 sf**

*Room with large table used for administrative purposes. Could also be used as a secondary writing classroom.*

**Bathrooms                      200 sf**

*Women and men require 1 water closet each by occupancy.*

**Services (2100 sf):**

**Storage                      1300 sf**

*Storage for props, furniture, set equipment, and other items. To be divided into separate spaces for different regions.*

**Mechanical                      700 sf**

*Located in the basement.*

**Total Net: 13325 sf**  
**Total Gross @ 20% Circulation: 15990 sf**

# Narratives

A number of different people will inhabit this space. There are those who are coming in for a night of laughter, those who take classes and perform, those who come in for daytime activities like laughter yoga, and those who run the place. Here are three different narratives to describe their separate journeys.

The following narratives are a sequence of ideas that have come before the design. They indicate the feelings that may come in the future, but may not directly reflect the resulting building. A real walkthrough experience will be given later.



Fake, Copyrighted Laughter

Figure 44



Real Laughter

Figure 45

## The Visitor

It's dusk. The sky is still dark blue. A group of people are standing outside of the entry, laughing. It is cold outside but inside the building it is warmly lit, and loud with excited speaking and laughter. Coming in through the door, the bar is in the distance. On the way to walking to grab a beer for the show, you see your friend you came to meet. He is all too excited to see the featured stand up comedy for tonight. You walk with him to the bar and grab a beer. Everyone seems to be headed toward the theatre. Following suit, you enter the dark theatre. There is no light on the tables and seats on the floor. The brightest light shines on the red curtain in front of you. An announcer booms loudly over the crowd, calling for everyone to cheer for the comedian coming up. The show is about to begin. After a night of laughs, the comedian bids the audience adieu. Everyone cheers and laughs, standing up to leave. As you head out, you realize that you cannot go out through the entry. Headed for the exit, the crowd is halted. For some reason, you must exit through a hedge maze. You are not sure how you missed this detail on the way in.



Figure 46



## The Student

Walking in through the lobby, you pass the theatres to reach the hallway for classrooms. Coming into the space where the classrooms come off of, you pass a strange corner of the building where a group is doing an improv performance. The light is shining down from above in this tall space, focusing all attention on this group. They are all laughing together in the sunshine. Coming into the classroom, the light comes from the windows, and a view of the neighboring city buildings can be seen. Your fellow patients have come in for an improv class. Laughing all throughout the session, bonds are created with the teacher and with the other patients from the hospital. Though sickness may be a part of your life, you forget all about it for the duration of the class, instead enveloped by the sounds of laughter of your new friends. After class, walking through the building with your fellow friends to leave, you decide to detour to look at the monkey room once again. Those silly, silly monkeys.





## The Performer

Time for the big show. Nerves are tense, but there is still excitement for tonight. The sketches are written, but it's time to practice one last time with the rest of the group. Meeting at the stage, you come in through the worker's entry and make your way over. You pass the rehearsal room and those monkeys on the way to backstage. You hit the changing room and makeup area first. Getting ready for the performance is important. Your fellow comedians are dancing and singing along to some music, getting excited about the show. The ready room is bright and cheery and full of music and excitement. You head onto the stage and open the curtain for practice. The auditorium sits in front of you, with layers of seats that are empty, but will be full tonight. There are plenty of seats, but it still feels like an intimate space where each person in the audience can be engaged. Doing the performance, the laughs of the group echo throughout the auditorium, however it will be much larger of a sound tonight. The anticipation is great.



## Site: Place

Now that there is a set program and a set city and region, a specific site must be chosen. First, let's look at Center City in Philadelphia and its history. The original city plan for Philadelphia, which is now the district of center city, was first laid out by William Penn in 1700. It is a gridded plan with a city square in the northern center. There are also four parks within Philadelphia which still remain today. South Street is the most southern border of Center City, which now is bordered by South Philadelphia.

Many patriotic events occurred within Philadelphia. It is where our founding fathers signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776. Since this is the place that helped to spur the Civil War, there were three Civil War battles that took place there. On October 15th, 1777, the Battle of Germantown, on October 22, 1777, the Battle of Red Bank, and on November 15, 1777, Ford Mud was taken by the British. However, we all know how that war ended. (ushistory.org)

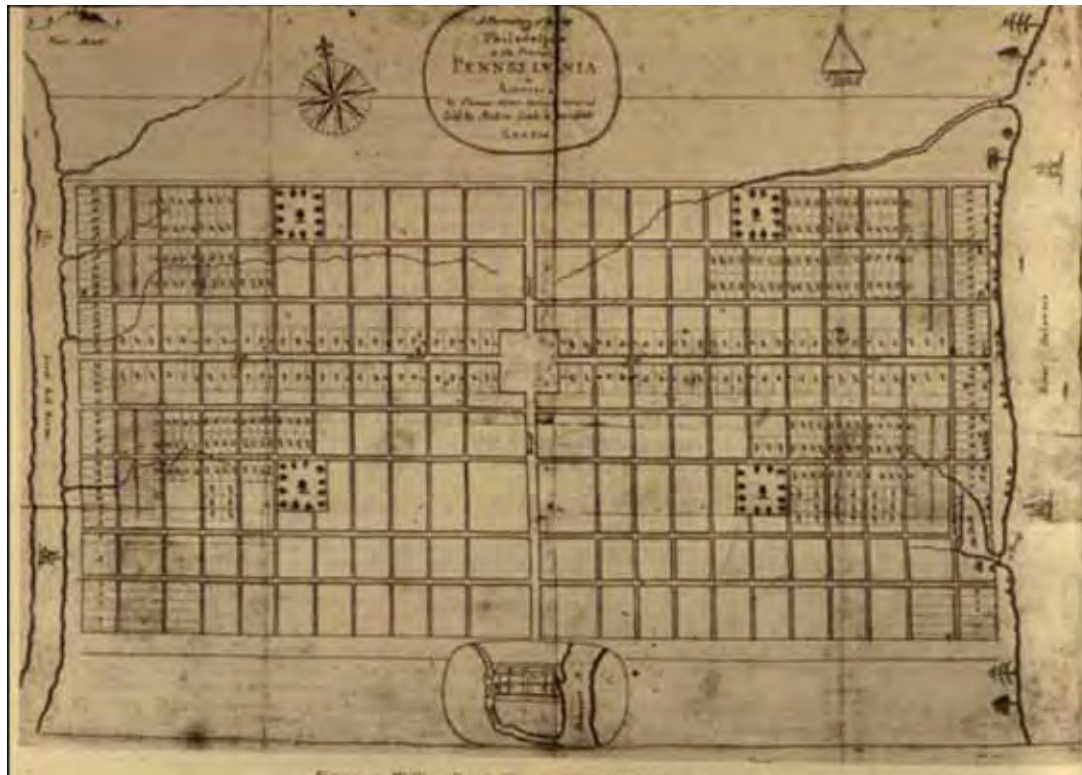


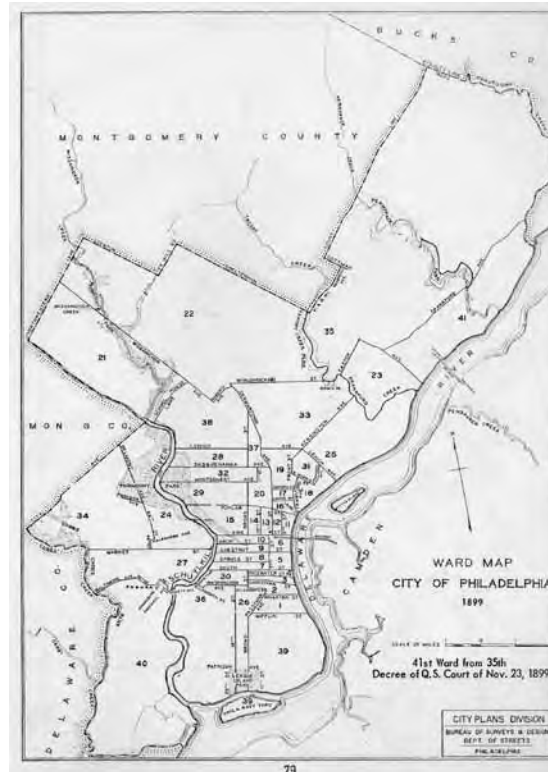
Figure 49

William Penn's Original Plan for Philadelphia, 1700

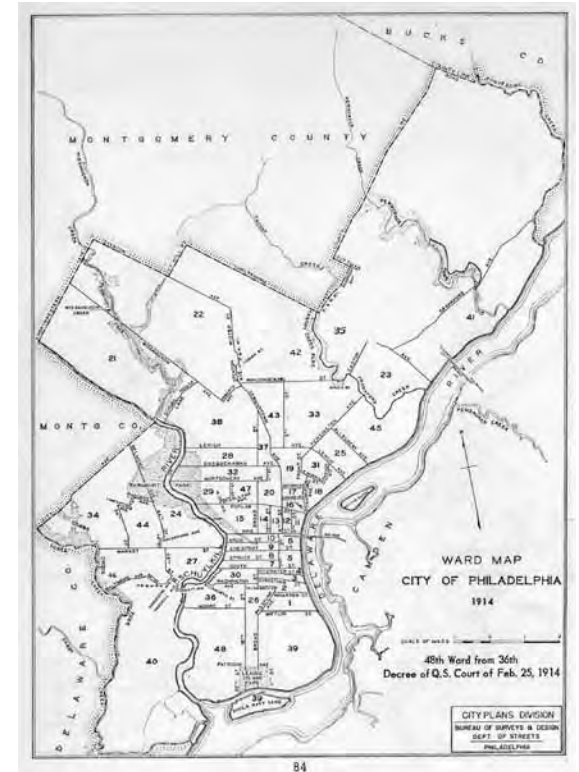
As the city of Philadelphia expanded and changed, Center City and South Street remained the same.



1854



1899



1914

Figure 50



## Site: Place

In the early 1900s, the region of South Street was a garment district. In the 1960s, it was proposed that an I-95 expressway be constructed over South Street, which made the property value plummet, although the project was never built. However, this cheap real estate attracted hooligans, hippies, and ruffians. In 1963, the Orlons wrote a song entitled South Street. The lyrics are as follows: "Where do all the hippies meet? South Street! South Street!" This bohemian feeling has remained on South Street even fifty years later. ([tri-liteonline.com](http://tri-liteonline.com)) It is a hot spot for young, outlandish crowds. The roads that cross South Street are numbered, starting with Front Street substituting for what would be First Street. Front to 8th Street is the most happening regions of South Street, though 8th to 14th is catching up. A comedy center within this region would help to liven things up and bring more attention further down South Street. (Maughan Interview)



Figure 51

## South Street Surroundings



Figure 52



Figure 53



Figure 54



Figure 55



## Site: Place

Using the points of the popularity of South Street, the lesser used portions of it past 8th street, and the border between South Philadelphia and Center City, as well as the size of the site, the intersection of 13th and South Street will be the location of the building. Within 3 blocks of the site the land raises approximately .03 feet, so the site is also flat. The size of the program on the site would also call for a 3-4 story building, the same heights as surrounding buildings.



Figure 56





Figure 57

Top: Site Dimensions

Bottom: Program on Site



Figure 58



## Site: Place



Figure 59

South Street Panoramic

The site has three roads around the site, with South Street being the most prominent, then the lesser two being 13th Street and Kater Street. Three exposed sides will mean determining the best points of entry, the most pedestrian traffic, the most car traffic, and other elements to consider during design.



Figure 60



13th Street Panoramic

Figure 61



Figure 62



Kater Street Panoramic

Figure 63

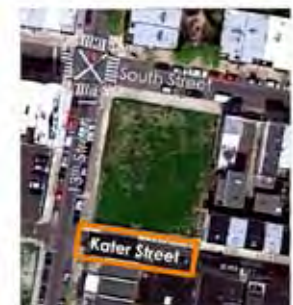


Figure 64



## Site: Place

There is also an existing graffiti wall on the site, which definitely will not be covered or torn down, but rather can be implemented within the building or within an outdoor courtyard.



Figure 65

There was a previous building on the site. In July of 2007, there was a dilapidated building on the residentially zoned portion of the site. Sometime between July 2007 and August 2008, the building was demolished and the tree on site was cleared. It has been vacant since.



July 4, 2007



August 4, 2008



April 11, 2010



July 4, 2007

Figure 66

Site: Place



Figure 67

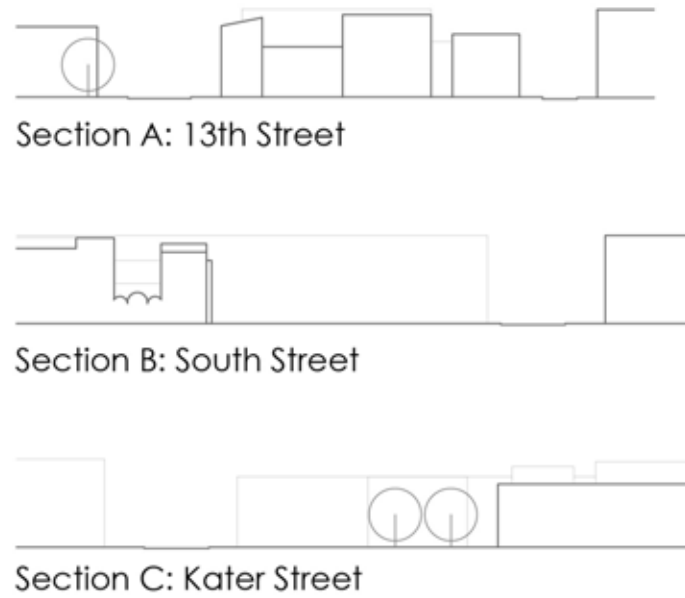


Figure 68

Site plan and section at  $1/64'' = 1'$



## Site: Place

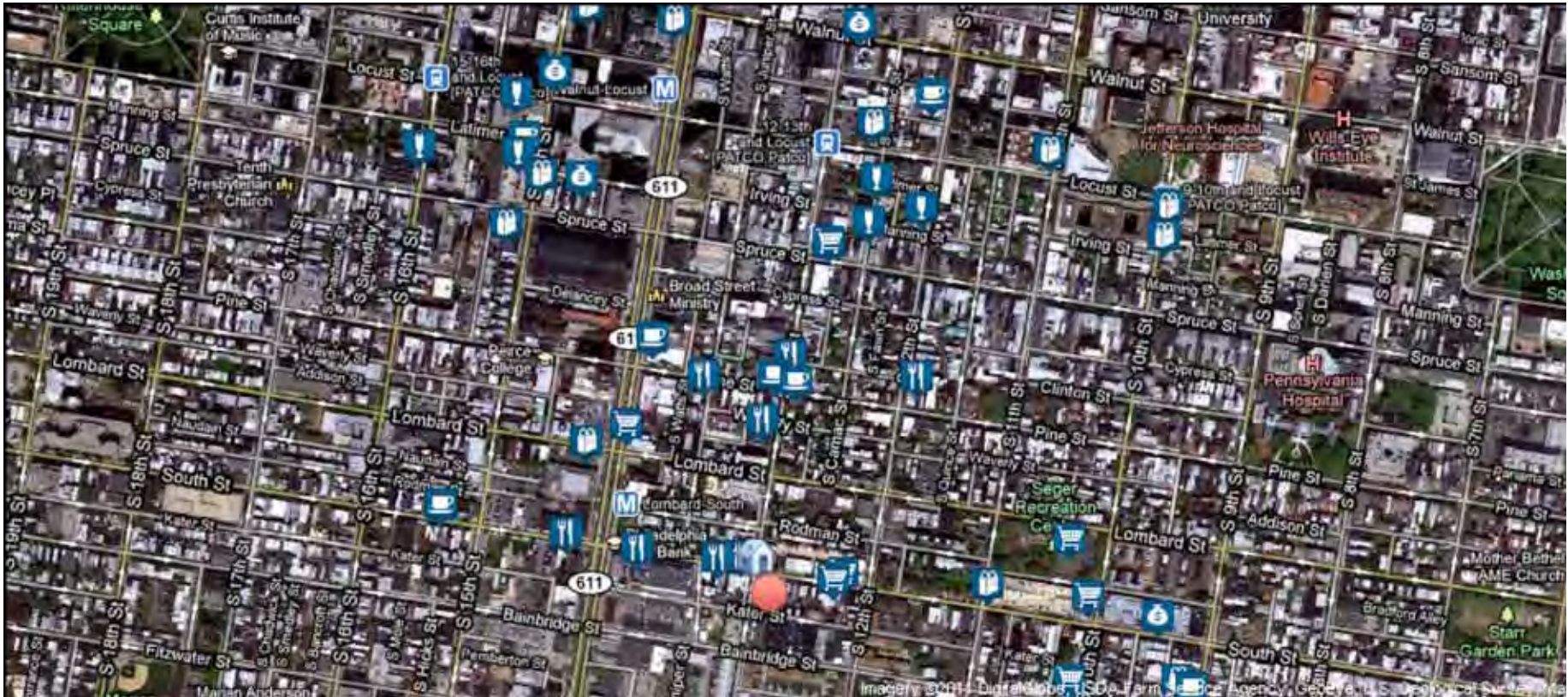


Figure 69

Within walking distance of the site there are many different building types near the site which can cater to the future building. For those who would come during the night and perhaps grab dinner and a drink before a show, there are 8 bars within 0.38 miles of the site and 8 restaurants within 0.17 miles of the site.

For everyday users like those who work there, teach, or take classes, there is a grocery store 3 blocks away, 10 coffee shops within 0.94 miles of the site, 4 chain pharmacies within 0.41 miles of the site, and 8 banks within 0.46 miles of the site.

Walkscore.com rates any space within the United States and determines its ease of foot travel based on other programs that are around it. For the intersection of South and 13th Street, it gave a 97% walkability score. ([walkscore.com](https://www.walkscore.com))





Figure 70

For those who would rather not take a car or cannot walk to the site, there is also a major subway and bus terminal 0.1 miles from the site. It is the Lombard-Broad Station. (septa.org)

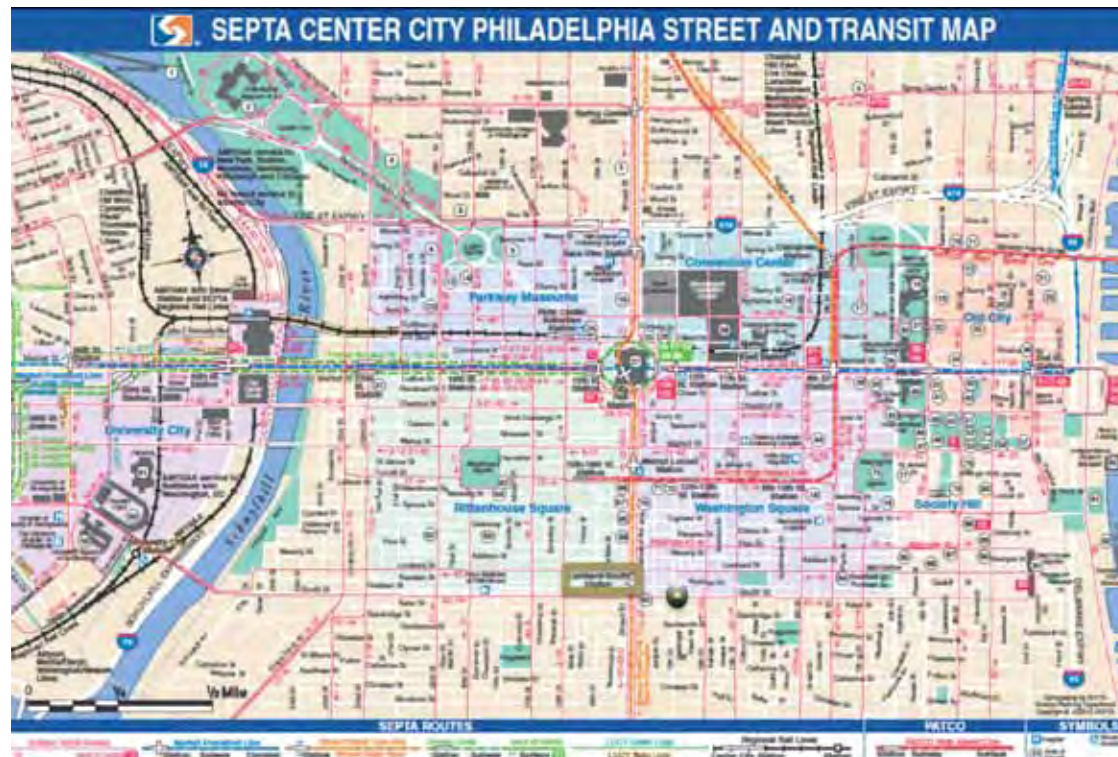
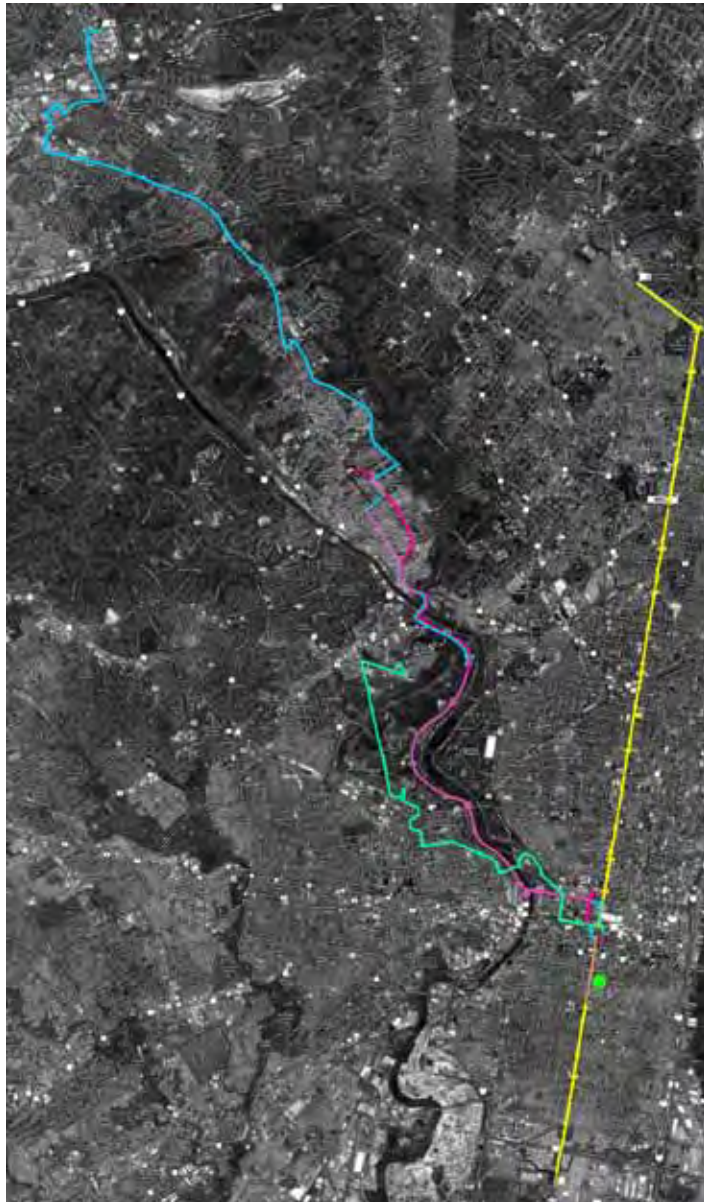


Figure 71

## Site: Place

There are also four main bus routes that either stop directly at the site, or at the Lombard-Broad Station. This makes the site easily accessible by public transit.



Green: 40 Bus

Blue: 27 Bus

Pink: 32 Bus

Yellow: C Bus

Green point denotes site

Mixed colors show multiple buses on one route

Figure 72



For those using cars, there is a pattern of one-way streets surrounding the site. However, there is also a main street nearby that goes in both directions.



Figure 73

# Regulatory Environment

## Materiality and Architectural Character of South Street and Neighboring Streets



Figure 74

Brick, concrete, and stucco finishes are the most common materials around the site



Figure 75

Row houses are a common typology (also seen in the site plan)



Figure 76

Buildings around the site are 3 stories tall



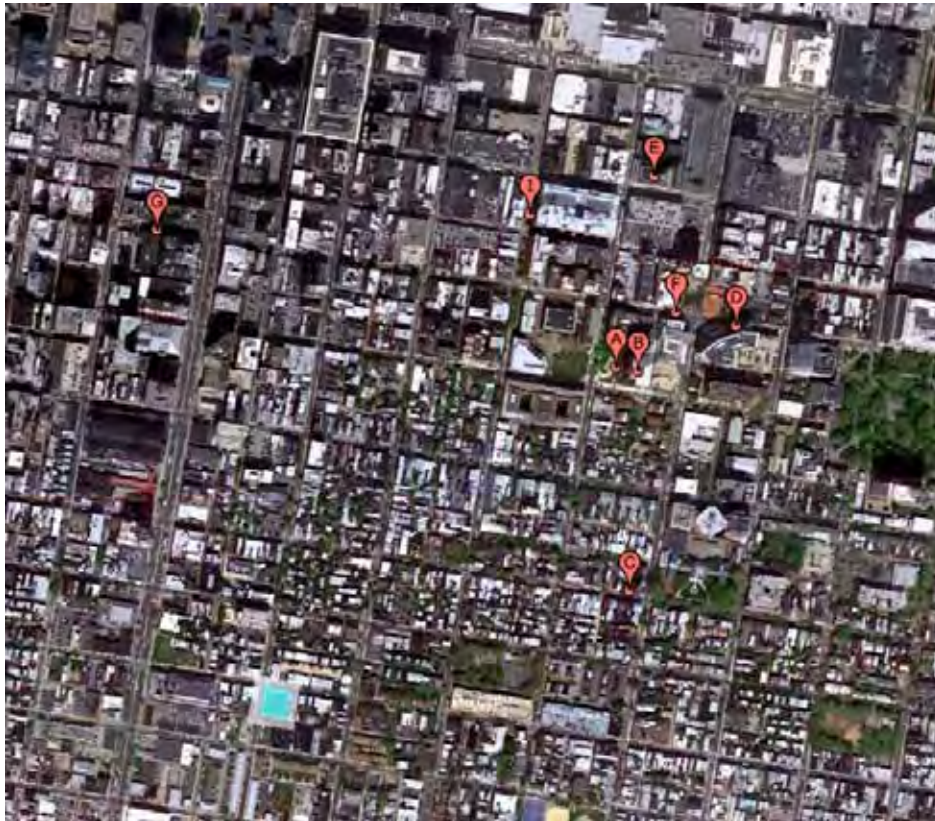


Figure 77

Within a one mile radius of the site, there are 8 cancer centers. All of these cancer centers could have patients that come to the center to attend laughter therapy and improv classes, to make them heal through laughter.

The nearest cancer center is at Pennsylvania Hospital (C), and is a 4 minute drive or a 12 minute walk to the site.

This analysis of exterior elements outside of the site is key because the site must be determined based on elements beyond property and ownership. Urban sites are more dynamic than a closed box, and need to be analyzed in many respects. Thinking of an urban site, it is important to consider it an 'unbound' site. This means the site is bound by the law and by borders, but should not be bound by the imagination. It is with these limitations presented by the law that we can thrive with creativity and design. (Kahn)



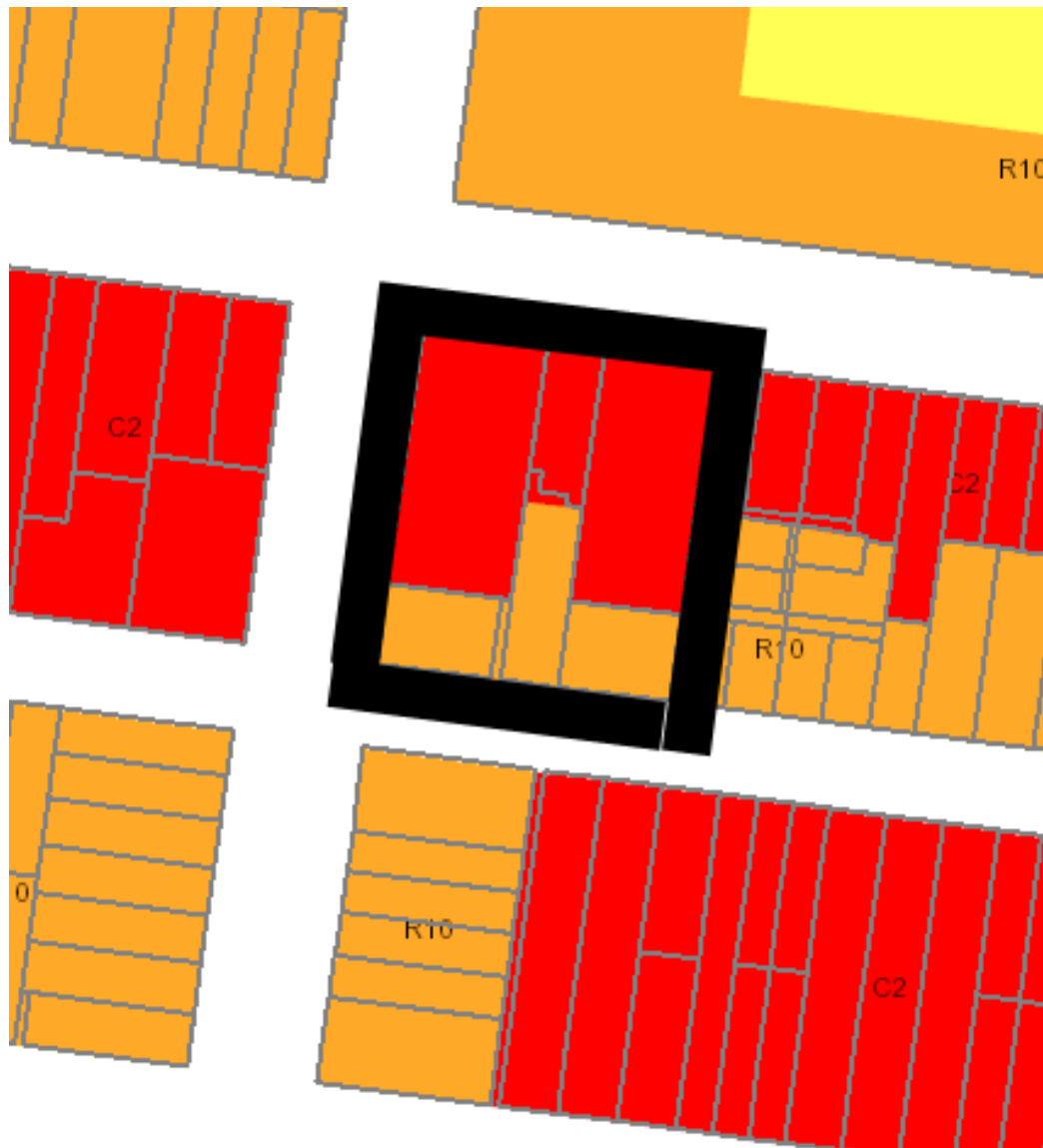
# Regulatory Environment

The area around the site has many types of zoning, with multiple types of commercial, residential, and recreational zones. The site is categorized as being six different lots, with the three on South Street being commercial and the back three being residential. It is a mixed enough area that the entire site being zoned as commercial would not be difficult to do.



Figure 78





### C2 Zoning Regulations for Philadelphia:

- Completely Enclosed Building
- No facade limitations, not considered a historical district
- Retail is allowed
- Apparel sales are allowed (gift shop)
- Allowance of offices, schools, and television studios (viral studio)
- Allowance of instruction in music, arts, or sciences (classrooms)
- Allowance of movie theaters
- Indoor and outdoor dining areas allowed (bar)
- Allowance of theater and entertainment functions to be the main use
- Open air entertainment allowed
- Liquor sale allowed (bar)
- No more than 80% of lot coverage of a building allowed on corner lots
- No building set-back line
- Side yards and courts have a minimum width of 5 feet
- The back of the lot must have at least a minimum depth of not less than 10% of lot depth, at minimum 8 feet
- The maximum building height is 35 feet and there is a 3 story limit
- One foot may be added to the height for each additional foot the building sets back from all lot lines, however the maximum is 60 feet
- No required on-site parking

Figure 79

(amlegal.com)

# Regulatory Environment



Figure 80

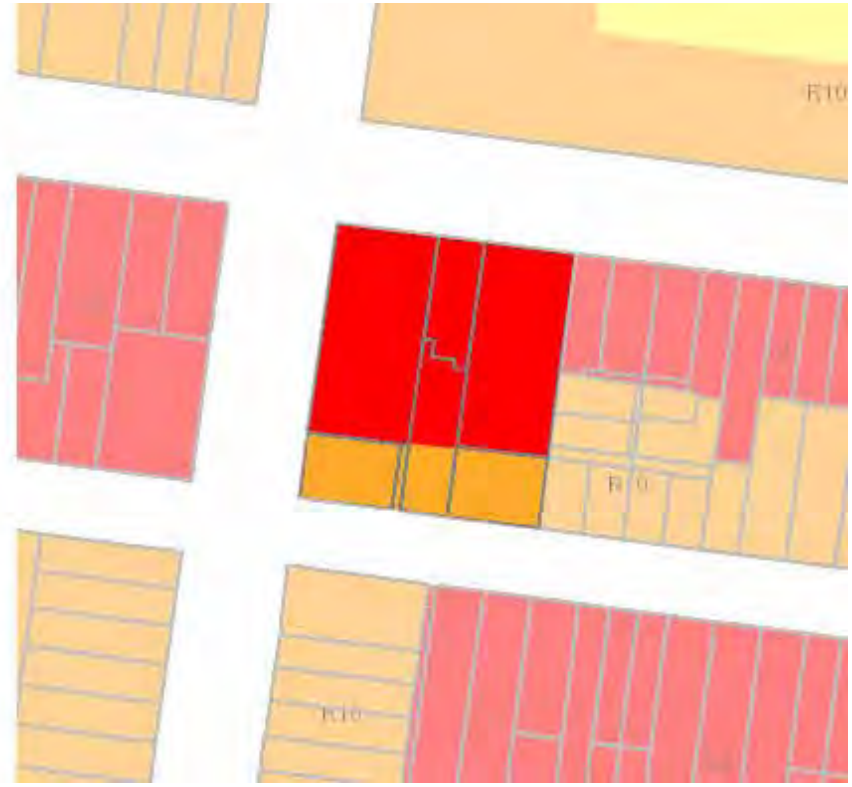


Figure 81

Based on the odd shape of the site created by the different parcels, I would propose that the back central parcel marked for residential (orange) be cut in half with the northern half be rezoned for commercial (red). I believe that a zoning change like this would be accepted, because it is a very small shift, no new zone types are created, and it does not change the rhythm of the commercially dominated street and residentially dominated street.



Figure 82



Figure 83

The building will only take up the front half of the site, where it is commercially zoned. In the future, there would be other residential buildings that are built behind it, most likely similar to those of the existing row houses southwest of the site. Therefore, for the rest of the project, I will act as though that existing strip of residential row houses is extended to 13th street.



# Regulatory Environment: Site Images



Figure 84



Figure 85



Figure 86



Figure 89



Figure 87



Figure 88





Figure 90



Figure 91

# Regulatory Environment: Requirements

## **Occupancy Groups**

According to the International Building Code, this program has elements under A1 Assembly. A1 dictates "...theaters for the viewing of motion pictures, dramatic arts, and performances, usually with fixed seating." There are other elements from other occupancy groups, like A2 as a food and drink establishment (because of the bar part of the program) and B, which includes "education facilities past the 12th grade". However, the overall theme and main programmatic elements would denote this program to fall under group A1 occupancy. (Allen 7, 11)

## **Structure**

Steel construction may also be the best choice for this project. This program should allow for possible growth in the future if larger performance spaces are needed or more classrooms need to be added. Steel construction allows for changes in the building over time. Because of the climate in Philadelphia, it also permits construction under adverse weather conditions. It minimizes off-site construction time, and is good for projects that are two to three stories, as this one will end up being. (Allen 27)

## **Lavatory Requirements**

According to A1 occupancy, for bathrooms there is a requirement for 1 water closet per 125 males, and 1 water closet for 65 females. There is also 1 required lavatory for 200 people. There is one required drinking fountain for every 500 people. Assuming that all staff and performers are present, as well as every seat for each theater and all classrooms being full, there would be an estimated 200 people in the public domain, and 50 people in the semi-public and private domains. Therefore, at maximum capacity there are around 250 people.

According to the International Building Code, this means there are four lavatories required total (two for each sex). One will be in the public domain and the other will serve the semi-public and private domains. In the public domain, the lavatories will have four water closets for men and seven water closets for women (based on 200 capacity). In the private domain, there is one water closet for men and three for women. (Allen 203, 205)





Figure 92

A1 Occupancy



Figure 93

A1 Sauce

# Regulatory Environment: Requirements

## Egress

Because the building is less than 35,000 square feet, it only requires one elevator. This elevator must also serve for transporting props and must meet accessibility guidelines. This means the elevator will have inside car dimensions of 6'8" x 5'5", and inside shaft dimensions of 8'4" x 7'5". (Allen 207)

Each floor with 500 or fewer occupants must have at least two independent exits. Since this entire building has less than 500 occupants, it must have two independent exits on each floor. (Allen 259)

For group A assembly, the maximum travel distance unsprinklered is 200'. For sprinklered spaces, it is 250'. The maximum common path of egress travel is 30' for assembly seating more than 50 occupants, and 75' for others. The largest a room can be with only having one means of egress is 49 occupants. This means the blackbox can have one exit. (Allen 285)

## Theater Seating Requirements

The minimum width of an aisle not serving more than 14 seats is 30". Aisles serving seating on one side or not more than 50 seats on two sides are 36". The longest a dead aisle can be is 20'. The minimum slope of an aisle is 1:8. The minimum clear row spacing is 12" plus 0.3" for every seat above 14. Clear row spacing can never exceed 22". Aisle stairs have a minimum tread depth of 11", minimum riser height of 8", and a minimum riser height of 4". The minimum stair width in an aisle is 36" when serving more than 50 seats on either side.

The common path of egress travel must not be less than 30'. (Allen 275) For the main theater, which seats 122, there must be five places for wheelchairs. For the blackbox and movie theater, which both seat 40-50, there must be two places for wheelchairs. (Allen 276) For occupant loads concerning the theaters, there must be at least 7 sq. ft. per person for concentrated seating, and 15 sq. ft. per person for unconcentrated seating with tables, chairs, stages and platforms. The theaters meet these needs in square footages. (Allen 283)

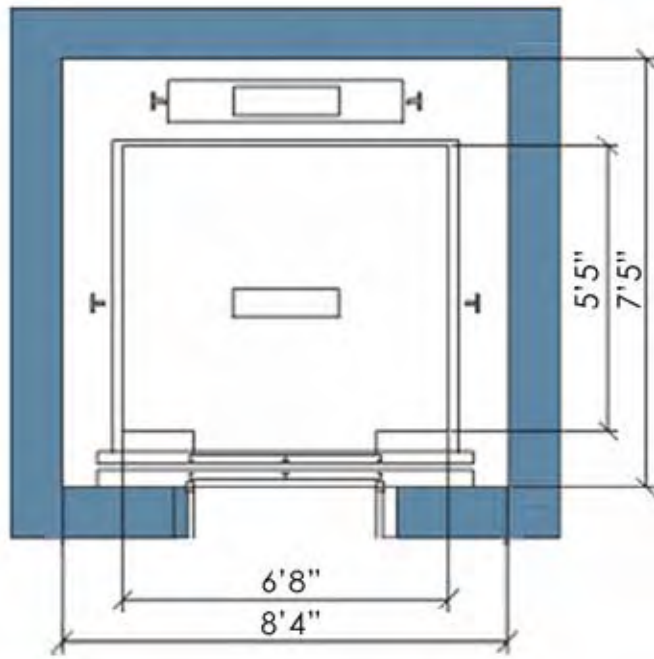


Figure 94



Figure 95

# Precedents

## Paul De Ruiter: Bijlmer Park Theater, Amsterdam

The Bijlmer Park Theater by Paul De Ruiter is located in Anton de Komplein in Amsterdam. It was designed from 2005 to 2007, and was constructed from 2007 to 2009. Its size is 21019 square feet, which is about twice the size of my project. The program contains one flexible theater space, three studios, rehearsal rooms, storage rooms, dressing rooms, a sewing room, meeting facilities and offices. This theater houses four users, the Circus Elleboog, the Krater Theater, the Youth Theater School and the Theater Workplace, which ranges from amateur to professional performances and requires flexibility in performance space. In working with all of the clients, a suitable space was created for all of their needs. I have also done this with the Philadelphia Improv Theater. ([archdaily.com](http://archdaily.com))



Figure 96



The urban development plan located the theater in the heart of the neighborhood at the end of the park. It is on the lake which gives the site plan extra dynamics. There are also steps to the water which function as either outdoor performance or a meeting place. (archdaily.com)



Figure 97

# Precedents

Paul De Ruiter: Bijlmer Park Theater, Amsterdam

It was also important to the users that the theater have day lighting because of performances that happen during the day. Many theaters keep the entire room dark with no windows for performances, but if rehearsals occur in the same space, light is needed. This will also be the case for the comedy theater. There is fenestration behind the stage, which allows for daylighting for practice. They can also be shaded to prevent light from coming in when it is unwanted. (archdaily.com)



Figure 98



Figure 99

For the different types of performances, a different types of seating was required. This is why there are seats around the stage which are flexible, and also typical theater seating. This type of flexibility will also be important in the comedy theater because the client has asked for the theater to be able to split into two theaters. (archdaily.com)



Figure 100



Figure 101



# Precedents

Paul De Ruiter: Bijlmer Park Theater, Amsterdam

As for structure and systems, the bridges for the operation of lighting and set management are integrated into the concrete floor. This makes the bridges safe and accessible.

The building also illuminates at night with different colors, depending on which program will take place. This is a fun addition to the building and can entertain. ([archdaily.com](http://archdaily.com))



Figure 102



Figure 103



The facade is constructed of corrugated metal, with wooden fins. (archdaily.com)



Figure 104



Figure 105

# Precedents

Paul De Ruiter: Bijlmer Park Theater, Amsterdam

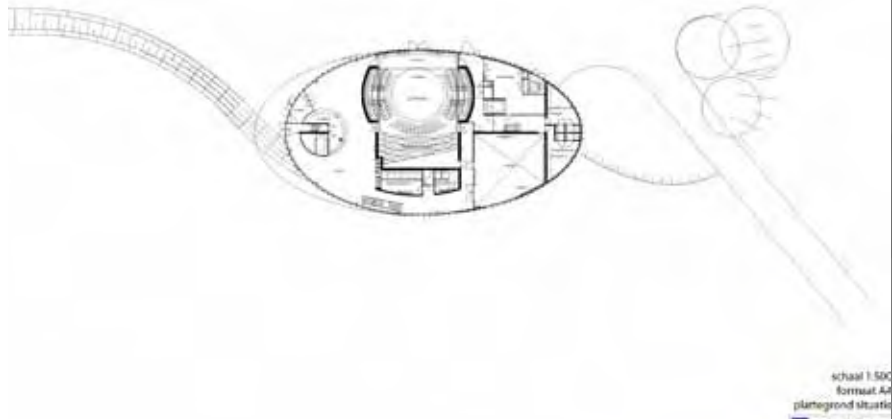


Figure 106

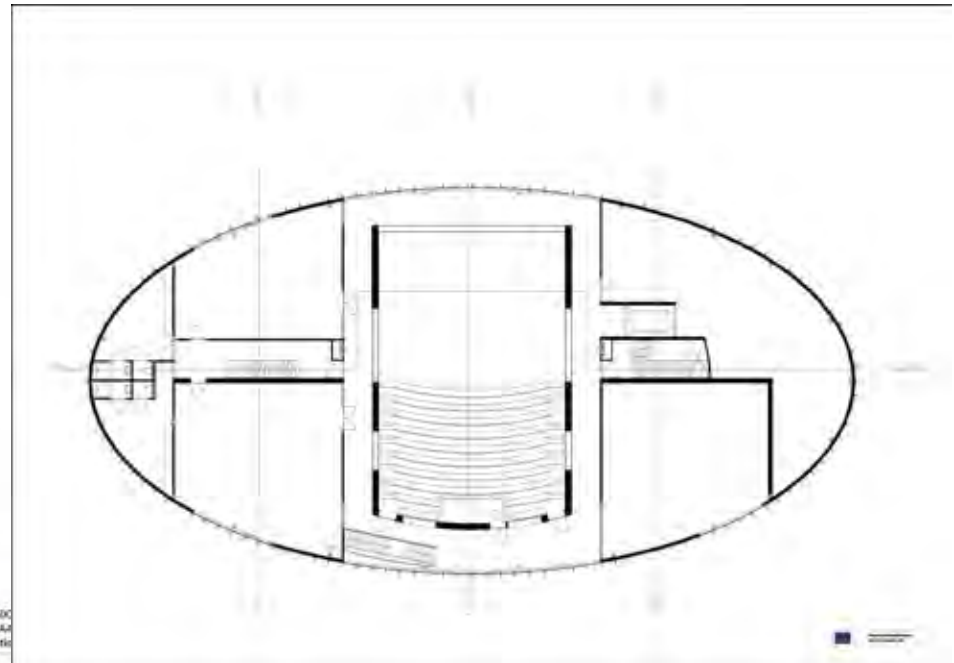


Figure 107

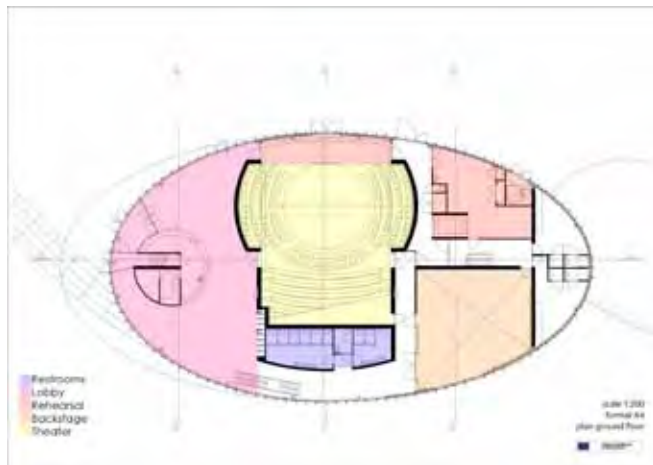


Figure 108

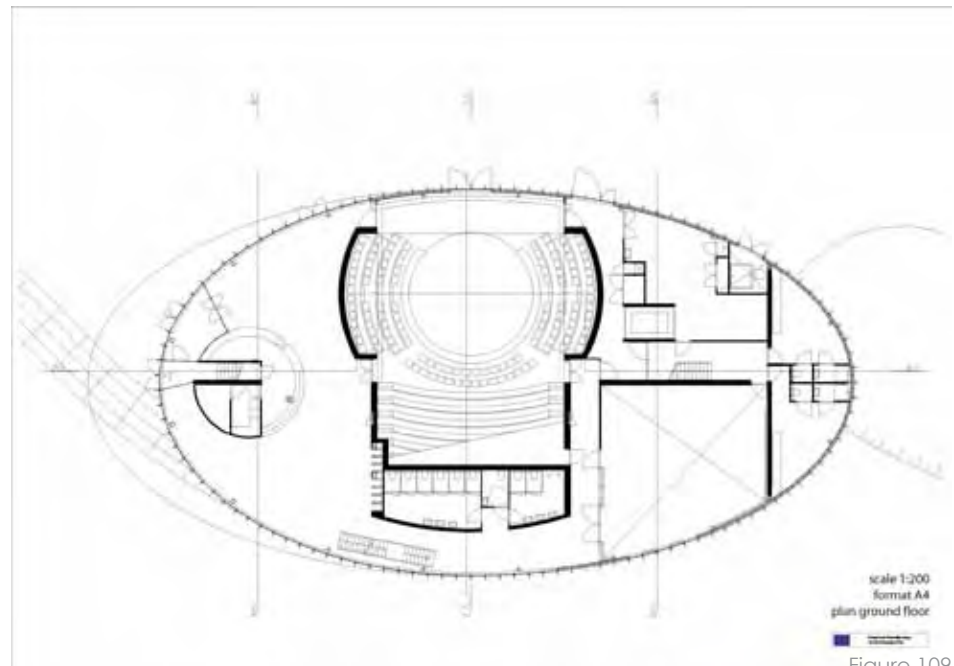


Figure 109

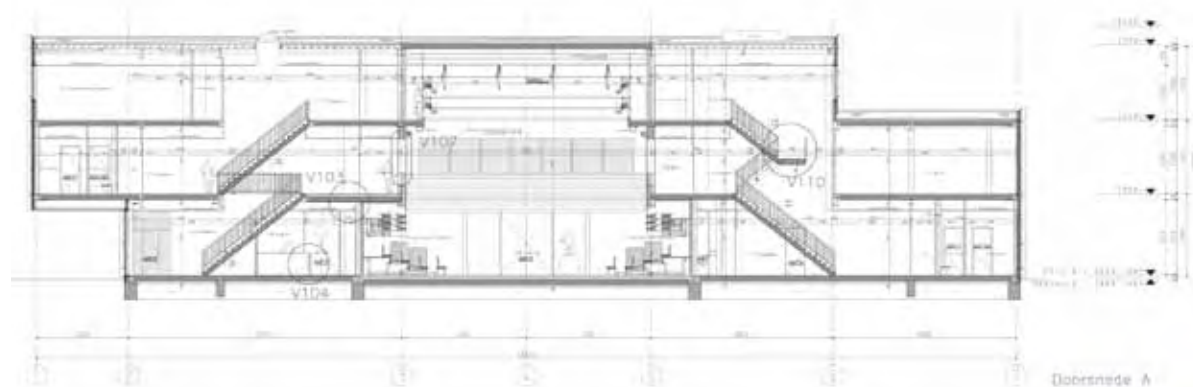


Figure 110

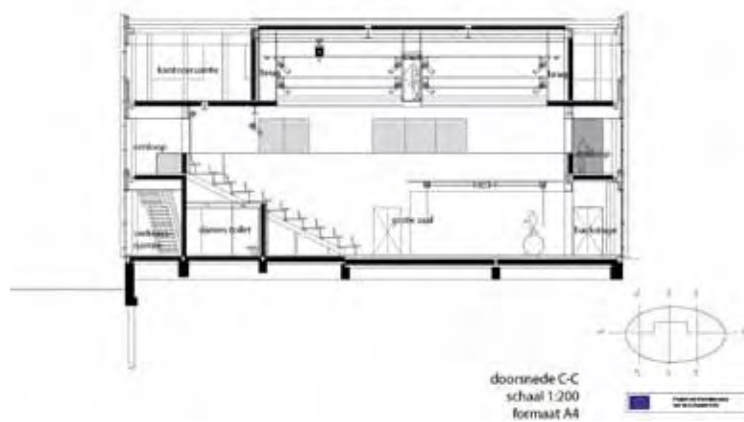


Figure 111

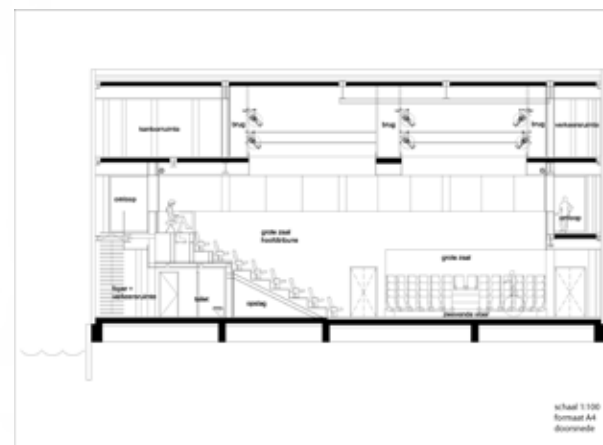


Figure 112

# Precedents

Charles Moore: Piazza d'Italia, New Orleans



Figure 113



Figure 114

Charles Moore was an example of an architect who took his job seriously but still is not afraid to have fun while doing so. The Piazza d'Italia was built in 1978, forgotten, and in 2004, restored by a hotel that moved in across the street. It was built as a tribute to the Italian population in New Orleans, complete with colonnades, clock tower, campanile, Roman temple, and public fountain the shape of the Italian peninsula. All of these elements added up to one plaza that tributes Italian culture, but at the same time Americanizes it and adds a sense of humor. Charles Moore even added his face spitting water, a humorous and subtle move. ([wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org))





Figure 115



Figure 116

This Piazza does not relate to this project in the sense of program or showing heritage, but rather in the humor and lightness it produces. It is architecture that conveys a definite message, a type of architecture parlante, which I think will be very important in this thesis project. If architecture is going to make us laugh, it should not be through the kitsch, but rather through subtleties and not taking the modernist ideas of design so seriously. Sticking to the laws of modernist architecture will not allow this thesis project to thrive, but rather straying from it and being able to lighten up, as Charles Moore has done here. (wikipedia.org)

# Precedents

Charles Moore: Piazza d'Italia, New Orleans



Figure 117

Moore's Piazza was put in a certain part of New Orleans to rejuvenate the area. There was to be more funding to rejuvenate the rest of the area, but the funds were not there, and the Piazza was left behind between abandoned warehouses and alleyways. By 2000, it was considered a "postmodern ruin", which is quite ironic since it reflects actual ruins in its design. ([wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org))





Figure 118



Figure 119



Figure 120

The region of South Street that I have chosen for the site was also selected to rejuvenate the area. However, the site is not in the midst of warehouses in an abandoned region of the city. It is just a few blocks away from one of the most prominent streets in Philadelphia, and it is also near many residences, which means people will pass it every day and be tempted to enter. It also serves as a destination with real programming, as opposed to an exhibition type space.







Figure 121

Figure 122

Design

# Thoughts on Design

Though the research phase seemed straight forward and the thesis idea was strong, when it came to design, a very important question had to be answered.

How do I design a building that reflects and evokes humor?

The beginning phase of design included knowing that the humor had to be on three levels to be successful. It had to be on the organization level, the path, and the level of the person inside the building. But first, we must zoom into the level of the building.



Earth

Figure 123



North America



United States of America



Pennsylvania



Philadelphia



Center City



South Street



South and 13th Streets

Figure 124



When first deciding the main parti and organization of the building, there was an exploration of many different types of organization. There were experiments with making the building a maze, making the outside look dilapidated and the inside pristine, and playing with delaying the path to make people take different paths to reach their destination.



Figure 125

People Lost in a Maze



Figure 126

Liebeskind's Old and New in Ontario

# Thoughts on Design

Soon the idea of dilapidation was found to be too weak, and not that funny. The idea of a maze or a changing path was basically annoying, but the maze idea had something to it. Being in a maze is annoying, but watching people getting lost in a maze can be funny. However, it isn't the maze aspect that was kept through the process, but rather the idea of voyeurism.



Figure 127



Figure 128

Left: People in a library  
Right: People in a museum



Watching people in a building may not always be funny. It's not funny in a library, and it's not funny in a museum, at least not usually. However, in a building for comedy performance, if you can see other people performing and making fools of themselves, it is funny. So the part of voyeurism is established. Voyeurism is strongly used in the section of the building.



Figure 129



Figure 130

Left and Right: People in improv classes and performances

# Site

Most regions of Philadelphia, including this one, are made up of rowhouses. The building's facade may fit the rowhouse typology, but it definitely stands out as something that is one of a kind.



Site Plan

0 5' 10' 20' 35' 50' 100'





Site Perspective Looking Southeast

# Outward Appearance

The first thing a visitor would notice about coming up to the building may just be its main façade on South Street. Philadelphia is highly populated with rowhouses, especially in South Philadelphia, which the site borders. Modifying the traditional brick rowhouse typology of Philadelphia into a display of the last four mayors of Philadelphia can be a humorous display. Especially with inhabitable noses.



South Street eastern approach



The mayors are displayed on a curtain wall with bus wrap, which is like a big sticker. It can also be peeled off, which means that mayors can be updated over time.

The effect of the rowhouse from the entry makes people think that they are going to enter a rowhouse-typology on the inside, but the element of surprise is waiting for them.



South and 13th Streets, Day and Night

# The Experience

Upon entering the center rowhouse under the sign, the visitor recognizes that they are not entering a rowhouse type building, and instead are immediately faced with an audience. The main theater points down towards the entry, which forces the audience to not only see their performer, but also puts the person who has just come in into the position of the performer as well.



Entry View



View from Lobby

The entry area serves as a meeting place as well, for not only visitors coming to a show, but also for comedians who are performing, teaching, or taking classes. There is a depression in the lobby, which serves as a hangout space, impromptu performance area, and an area for viewing viral videos. The entrance to the black box is also there. There are stairs that double as ramps to serve as seating for viewing the films or impromptu performances.

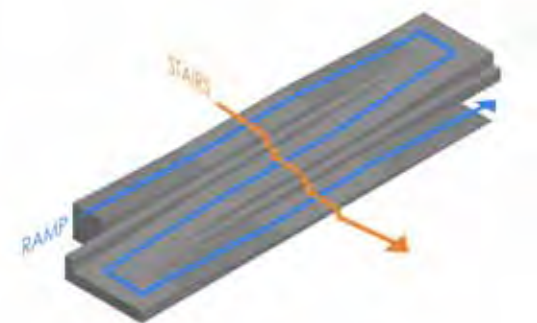


Ground Floor

0 5' 10' 20' 35' 50' 100'



Views of Lobby



Ramp to Stairs



# The Experience

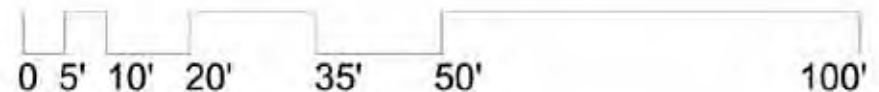
The black box is the slightly smaller, more flexible theater. There are just tables and chairs to serve as adjustable seating, and the stage also sinks to allow for different types of performances. The black box is the biggest space that does not have an aspect of outside voyeurism to it because there cannot be windows.



View into the Blackbox



Section Looking West





Back in the lobby, there are many other opportunities for voyeurism. One is the service wall. On the east side of the building, all of the services are stacked, which include bathrooms, storage, and backstage programs. The wall that shields the services from the lobby has strategically placed openings. On the first floor, the wall hovers from the floor, exposing the lower leg. On the second floor, the opening leaves way for the hips. The third floor opening is for the head and the top of the torso. This leaves opportunity for the chance of different combinations of a figure, including a floating head, disembodied feet, or even a full elongated figure.



Section Looking East



Service Wall Elongated Figure

# The Experience

Going up to the second or third floor in the elevator also makes a short voyeuristic experience. There are two small windows facing different directions on the second and third floor, so as someone goes up the elevator, they get glances at the lobby and at the theater on their way up. The elevator is also slanted, which plays with the tilting walls of the classroom and the main theater wall. There are also two small windows by the stairs that make opportunities to see into the main theater as people climb the stairs.



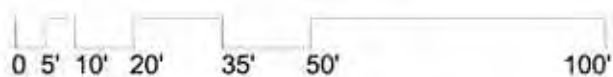
Second Floor



Section Looking South



Elevator Views



A visitor to the main theater may notice when they take their seat that they are not the only audience, and the show that they intended to see may not be the only one that they get. Sitting in front of the large glass wall of the theater, the audience can not only see the performer in front of them, but also people coming into the entry, people in the classrooms practicing, and people on the administrative floor above. This makes for an opportunity to see many different back shows at once. If the performers in front find it distracting or unwanted based on the show, they of course have the option of drawing the shades.



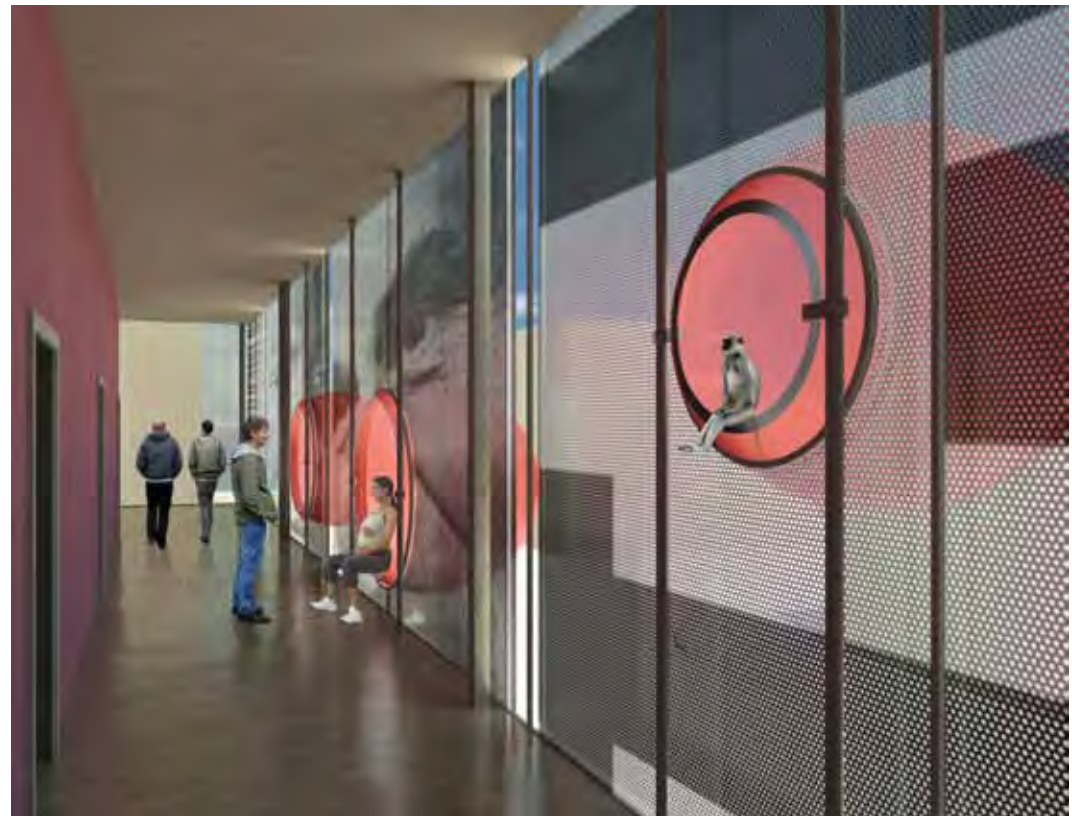
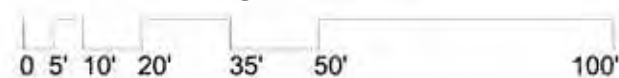
View From Theater

# The Experience

The visitor entering for taking or teaching classes has a slightly different experience. They would still have the same initial entry view, but upon reaching the second floor would pass by the bar for the theater and perhaps take a seat in the student lounge which overlooks the lobby. The noses on the front façade of the building still cannot be seen at this point, but a visitor may have a sense of where they should be in the building. When the classes are ready to join, they go around a blind corner where they come upon the hallway of noses. People can sit in the noses and hang out before class, or just peer through the smaller noses at head level before class.



Section Looking North



Hallway of Noses



Upon entering the classrooms, they are faced with an audience. The large glass openings on the walls of the classroom face the main theater, which means another audience enjoying the show.



Classroom View Towards Theater

# The Experience

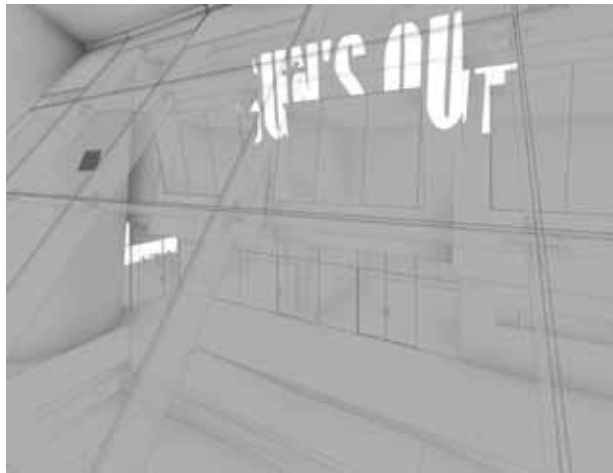
The administration would go up one more story to find their eagle eye's view, where they can see just about everyone in the lobby and in the theater, but not into the classrooms below. Some of the offices make some of the administration go through other people's offices to get to their own, or have their office be a passageway. Because the offices are one of the more isolated programs, they still needed a sense of voyeurism within them, and this also lets the leaders of PHIT interact together.



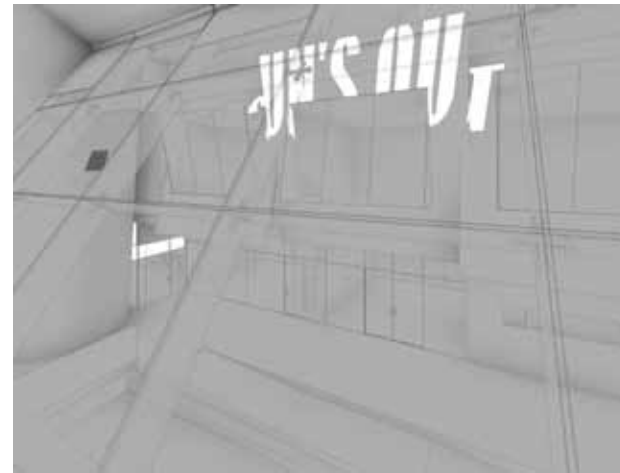
High-Fives in an Office Setting

Figure 131

On the way out of the building and looking from the theater side of the building, a visitor to the building would see 'SUN'S OUT' written in sunlight on the classroom walls. This is because of the massive skylight in the main lobby. When making a statement about the skylights needed for the lobby, it may as well make a statement in the rest of the building. Making an obvious statement that only works when there is direct sunlight is a comedic statement in itself. Because of the low angle of the sun in the winter, the skylight will allow for light to enter, but will not make the sign work. This is why there is a projection from the main theater towards the classrooms that would read "WINTER STINKS" in the winter.



Fall Equinox



Spring Equinox



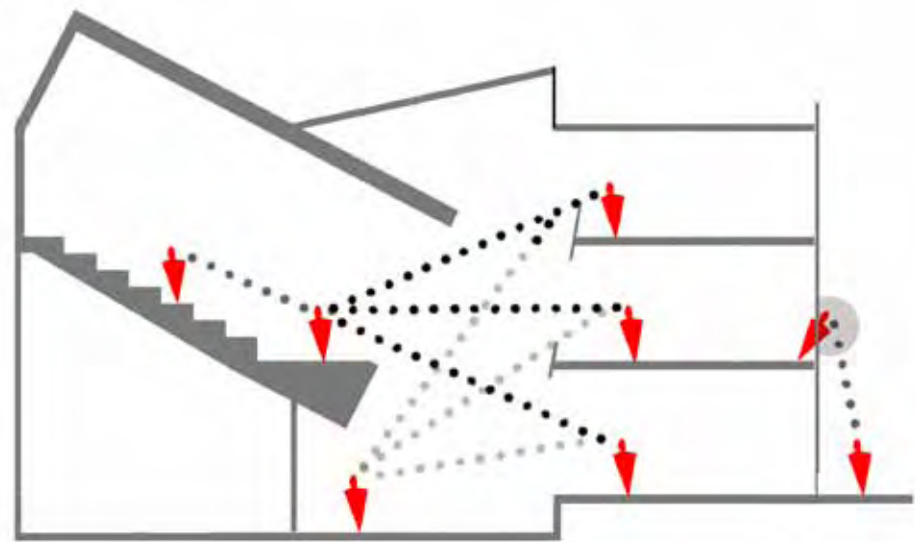
Summer Solstice



Winter Solstice

# The Experience

The lobby space is definitely the heart of the building. No matter where you are in the building, you can always see someone doing something silly, whether it be in the main theater, the gathering space in the lobby, the classrooms, the administration, and more. It is the heart of the project and the best way to see the constantly changing face of comedy.



Voyeurism



Outside of the building, walking along the north façade a visitor would not only notice the mayor's faces, but also people inhabiting the noses. This also creates voyeurism on the outside of the building. On the west façade, the café on the corner is clearly visible, and people walking can also see through the mesh, which is the same material as the mayor's bus wrap, to program such as the viral film studio, where people are also performing. The west facade causes as a break in the joke, a build-up, because the mayor's faces are not the only joke on the façade.

The façade in the alley does not provide for much light, but it does provide for laughs. If the front of the building is faces, there is only one thing the back could be...



Exterior Interaction



North Facade (Front)



West Facade (Side)



South Facade (Back)

0 5' 10' 20' 35' 50' 100'

# The Experience

Here is the series of moments that occur in the building on a visit to the main theater.



A Greeting from Above



View upon Entry



Meeting Area and Viral Wall



Elongated Torso



Small Window into Theater



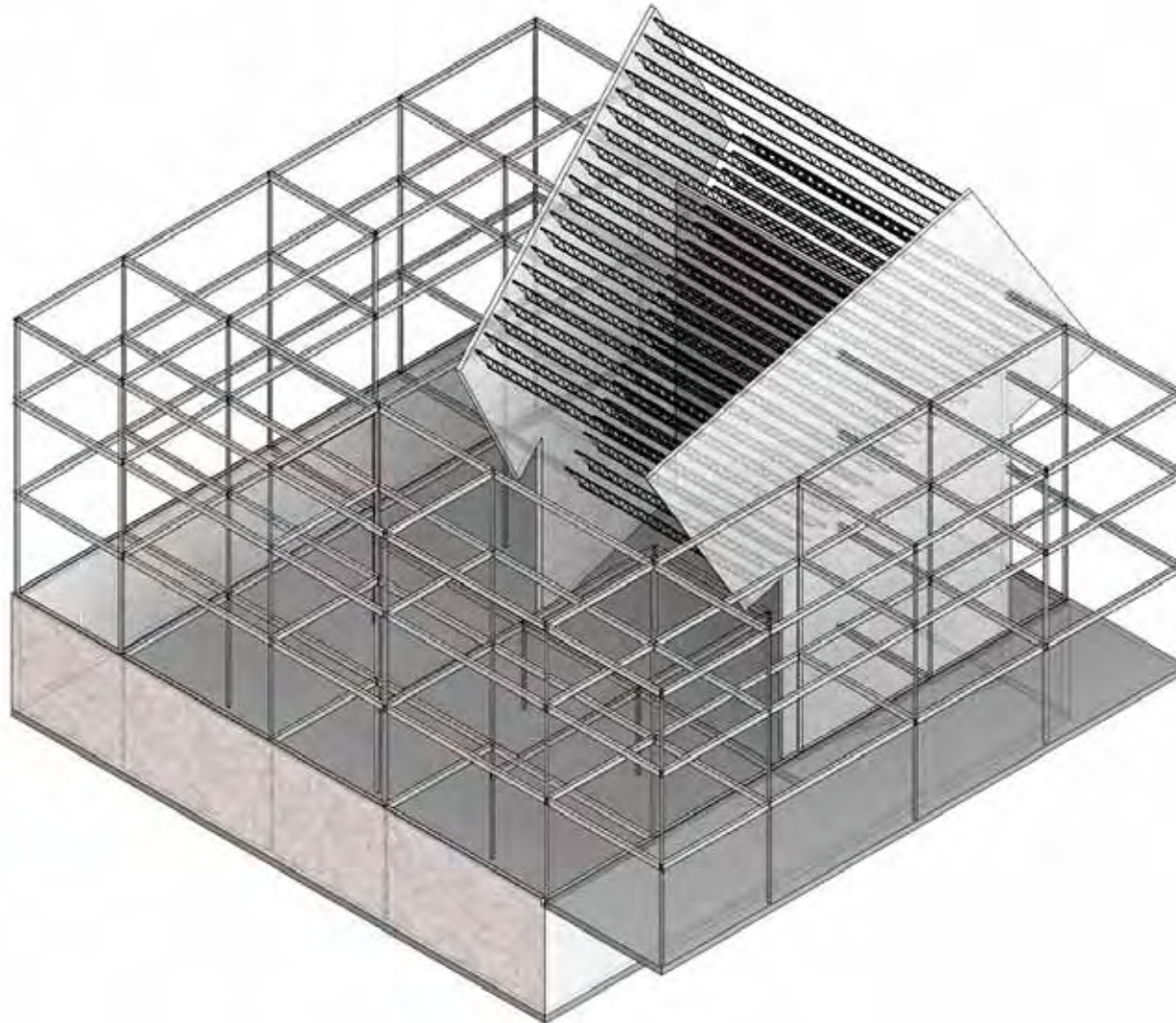
Audience View



Back Alley View

## Diagram: Structural System

The structure of the building is set up on a grid, with the exception of the theater section. The regular grid is about 15' x 20', though it changes, and is made of steel wide flange columns and beams. The basement foundation is concrete, as are the walls of the basement below. The side walls of the theater are concrete bearing walls, with 18" web joists to support the ceiling and floor in-between the theaters.





The image below depicts use of bus wrap and building wrap, which is also used on the facade of the mayors on the north side of the building. The wall section to the right is a wall section showing the construction of the main theater. The glass wall is made of 6" fins that interlock with metal fasteners. The wall section farther to the right shows the northern facade. It shows the curtain wall that has the building wrap applied to it, and also shows the construction of the noses. The noses are made of translucent fiberglass, and have a connection around the open rim that attaches to 2" rods, which then connect to the structure on the floor below and the floor above.

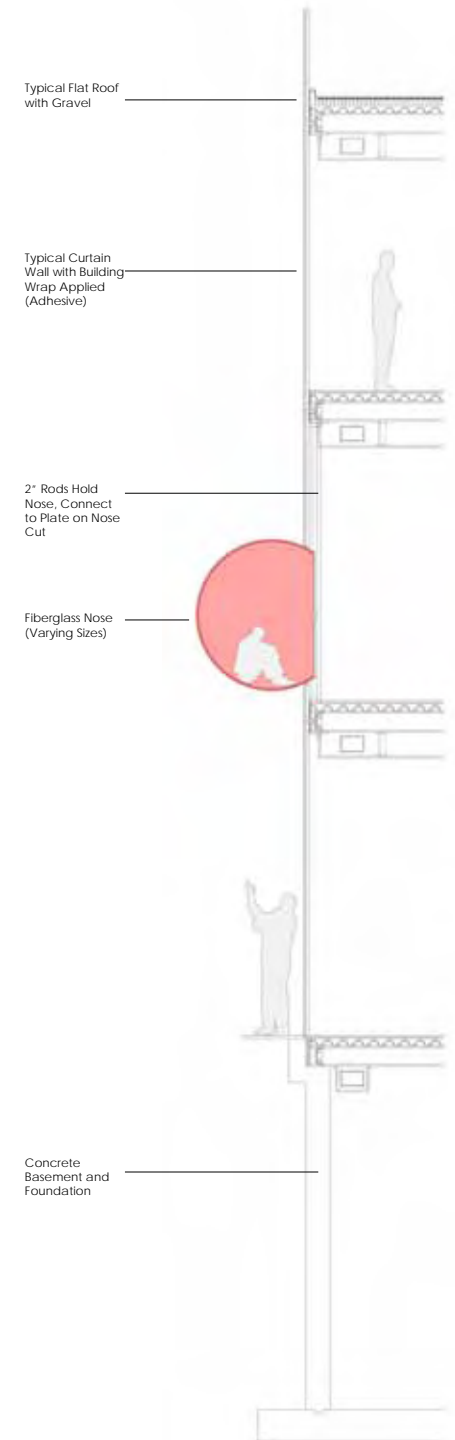
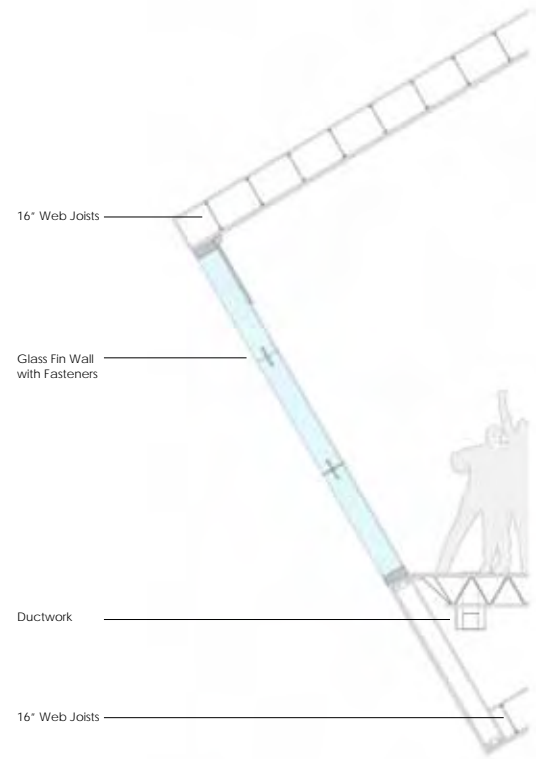
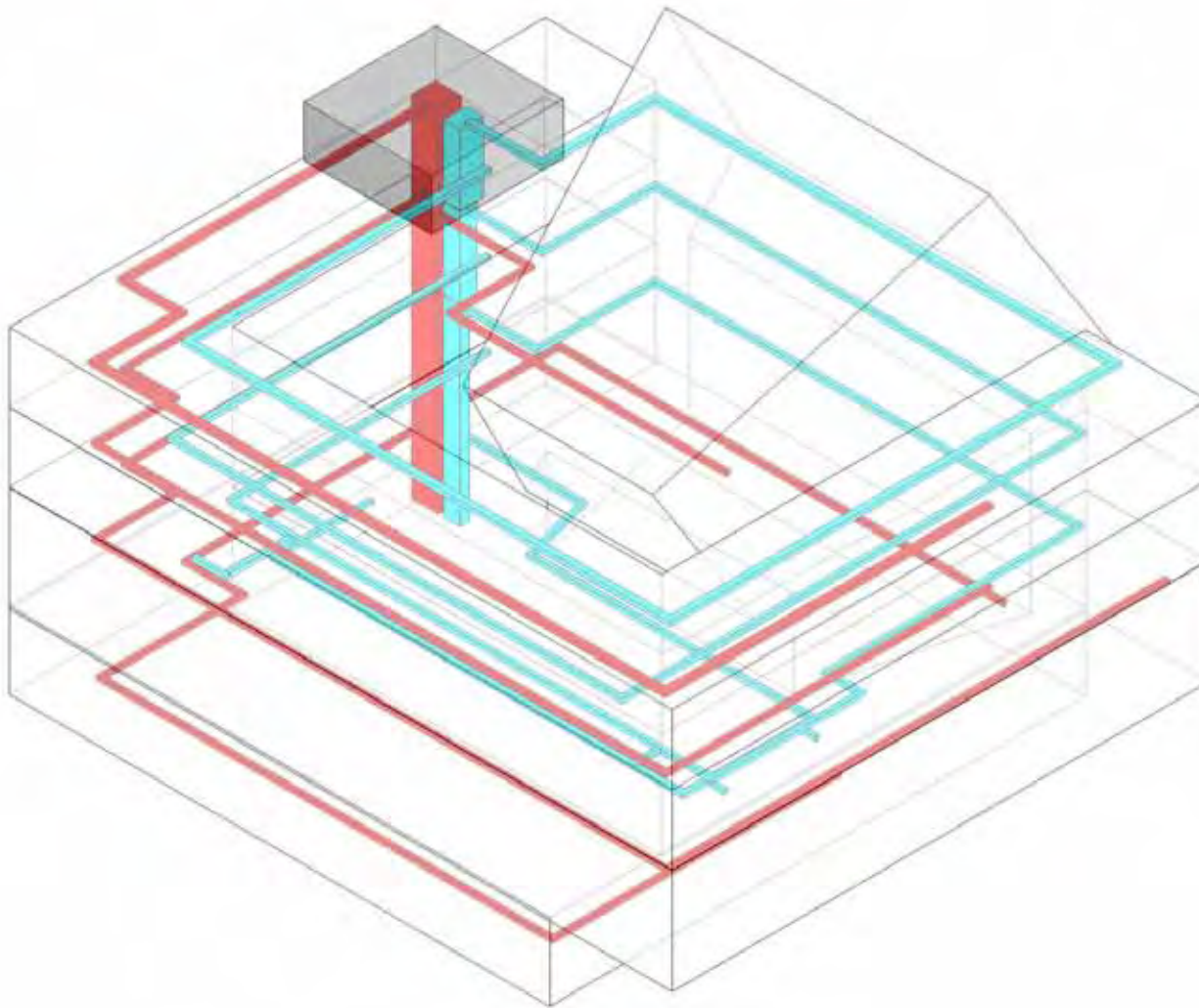


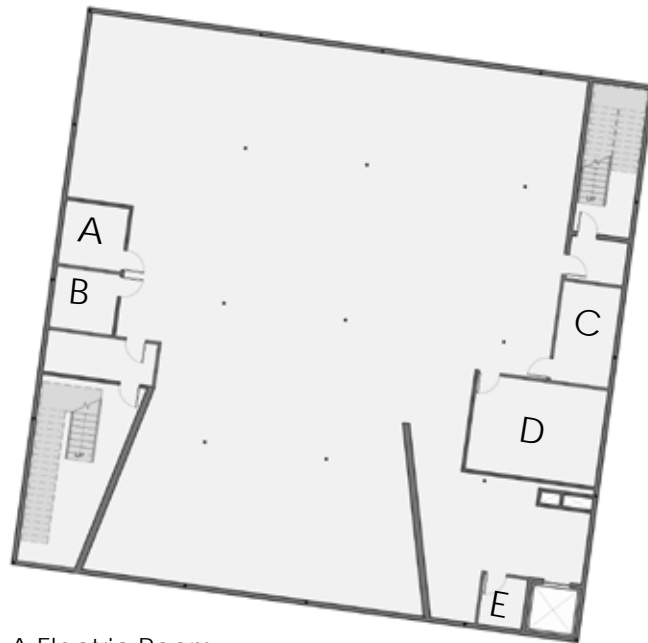
Figure 132

## Diagram: Mechanical System

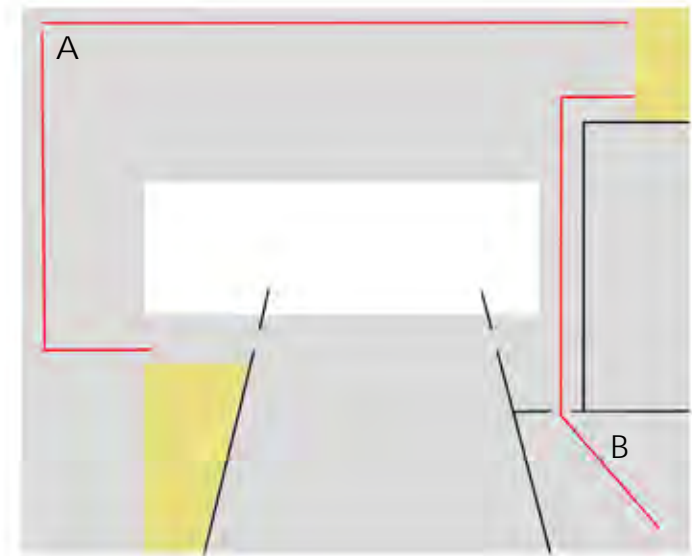
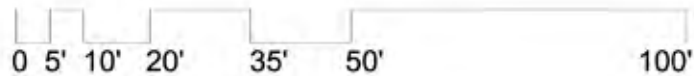
The mechanical system uses a VAV system that has the air handling unit on the roof. The shafts that come down from the roof to supply each floor come down through the storage area on each floor and support the supply (blue) shafts and the return (red) shafts. The ducts run in the ceiling under a dropped ceiling in the north, west and east ends of the building and run through the spaces in-between the two theaters in that region.



The basement plan shows the different support systems to the building that are necessary to run all systems well. The egress diagram shows the second floor exit paths, which is the floor that has the longest paths of egress. The A path is 90 feet, and would be sprinklered. The B path is 75 feet, and does not need to be sprinklered.

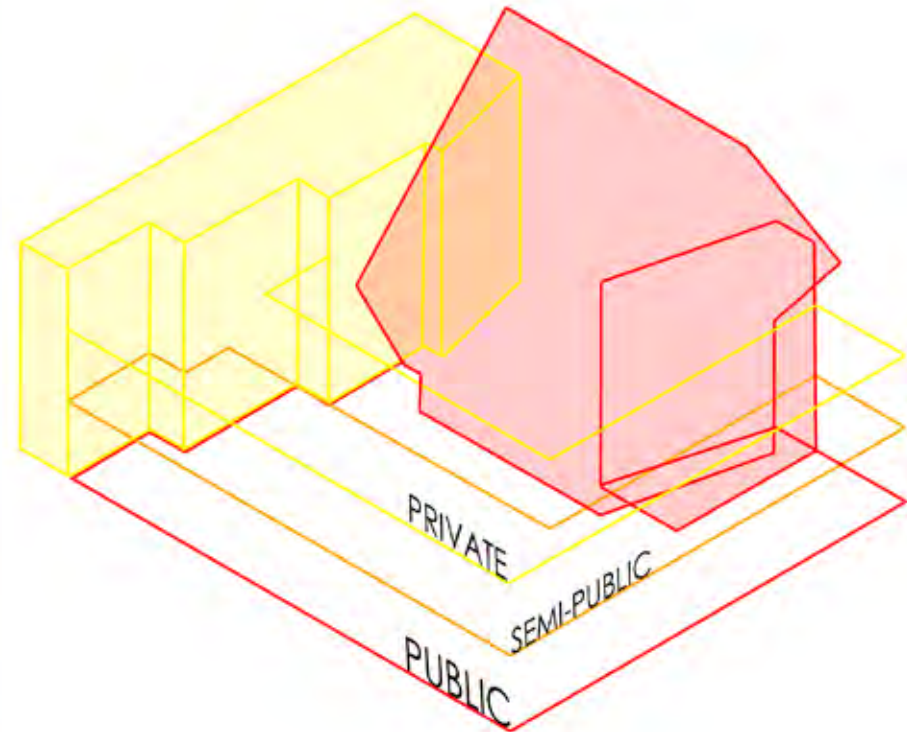
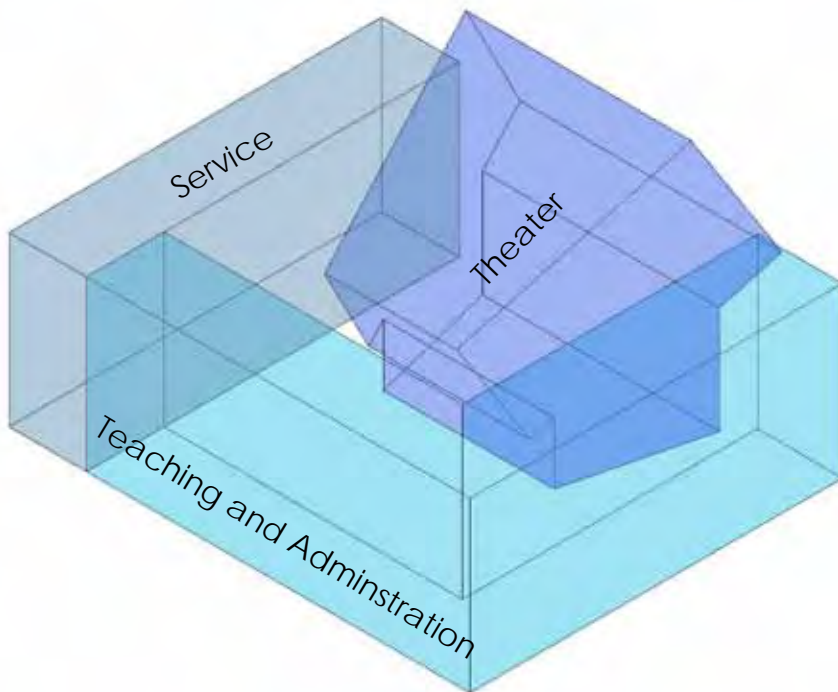


- A Electric Room
- B Network Closet
- C Water Service
- D Boiler
- E Elevator Room



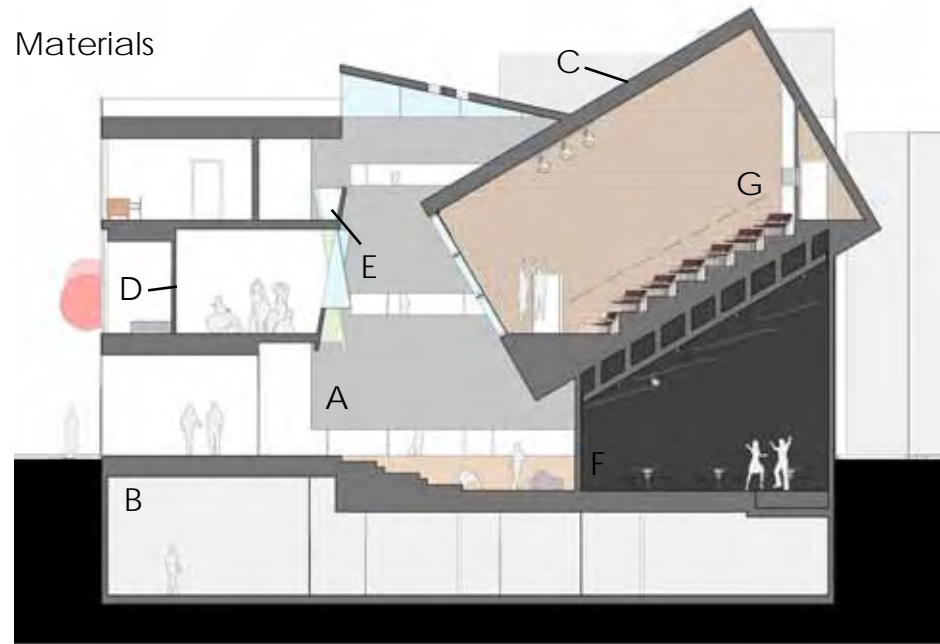
# Diagram

The diagram on the left shows the organization of the building. There are three sections, the service sector, the theater sector, and the teaching and administration sector. The space in the middle forms the public space for voyeurism. The diagram on the right shows the public, semi-public and private areas of the building. The yellow represents the most private, which includes the service sector and the administration on the third level. The orange line represents the semi-public, which includes the entry of the main theater and the classrooms. The public domain is in red, which includes the theaters and the ground level, which has public program such as ticketing, coats, gift shop, viral editing, and viral viewing in the lobby.

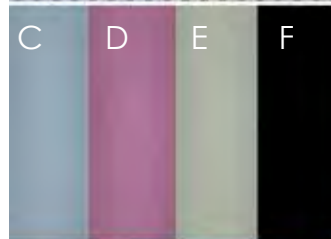




## Materials



A  
Metal Mesh  
(Service Wall)



C D E F  
Paint  
C: Theater Top  
D: Classroom Int.  
E: Classroom Ext.  
F: Blackbox



H  
Wood Floor  
(All Floors)



B  
Concrete  
(Basement and Sides  
of Theater)



G  
Acoustic Panel  
(Sides of Theater Interior)



Glass  
(Not broken)





Figure 133

## Process and Reference

# Thesis Preparatory Board

At the end of the preparation stage before design, we were asked to make a summation of what our project is to be in poster form. This poster was originally 36" x 48". It explains the thesis idea, the original program layout, site information, and some precedent information.



Teaching & Learning Assessment	Applied Science
--------------------------------	-----------------

Intentionally carrying the laughter. It is intention, you make yourself laugh, then the  
 off hand laughter is that moment. Laughter will be the way to make of our entire  
 system. In the back, laughter will be the preceding theme in keeping its own  
 rhythm to find you on the end of the line.

The *Journal of the Philosophy of Science Association*, 1971, 13, 179-181. Permutation tests, permutation statistics, for stochastic simulations, search groups, inverse power, inverse and search for perfect symmetry. They say either inverse, search, adding, and which symmetry, search. They say both and not only the permutation tests and permutation statistics, but also permutation tests of symmetry, and search, and search, and search.

Figure 1 illustrates four data structures: Array, Hash, Tree, and Graph. Each structure is represented by a set of boxes and lines. Array is a single row of boxes. Hash is a table with two columns. Tree is a hierarchical structure with a root box and child boxes. Graph is a set of boxes connected by lines.

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

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100

Year	Number of cases	Number of deaths
1990	10	0
1991	15	0
1992	20	0
1993	25	0
1994	30	0
1995	35	0
1996	40	0
1997	45	0
1998	50	0
1999	55	0
2000	60	0
2001	65	0
2002	70	0
2003	75	0
2004	80	0
2005	85	0
2006	90	0
2007	95	0
2008	100	0
2009	105	0
2010	110	0
2011	115	0
2012	120	0
2013	125	0
2014	130	0
2015	135	0
2016	140	0
2017	145	0
2018	150	0
2019	155	0
2020	160	0
2021	165	0
2022	170	0
2023	175	0
2024	180	0
2025	185	0
2026	190	0
2027	195	0
2028	200	0
2029	205	0
2030	210	0
2031	215	0
2032	220	0
2033	225	0
2034	230	0
2035	235	0
2036	240	0
2037	245	0
2038	250	0
2039	255	0
2040	260	0
2041	265	0
2042	270	0
2043	275	0
2044	280	0
2045	285	0
2046	290	0
2047	295	0
2048	300	0
2049	305	0
2050	310	0
2051	315	0
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2064	380	0
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2067	395	0
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2069	405	0
2070	410	0
2071	415	0
2072	420	0
2073	425	0
2074	430	0
2075	435	0
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2078	450	0
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2080	460	0
2081	465	0
2082	470	0
2083	475	0
2084	480	0
2085	485	0
2086	490	0
2087	495	0
2088	500	0
2089	505	0
2090	510	0
2091	515	0
2092	520	0
2093	525	0
2094	530	0
2095	535	0
2096	540	0
2097	545	0
2098	550	0
2099	555	0
2100	560	0

David P. Thelen, Director (2008-2011)

Experiments in South Africa

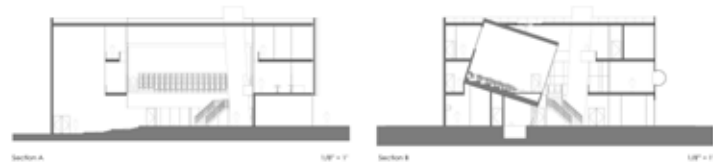
100

The Department of Justice, through the Justice Department's Inspector General, is reviewing the procedures because of the complaint. It will issue a final report to the public in the next few weeks. For more information, see the Justice Department's website.

# Mid-Critique



Midway into the design phase, we had a critique. Though the parti of the building was developing fine, the organization and overall strength of showing the parti was lacking. The building needed to be somewhat reorganized, and more strongly show the parti.

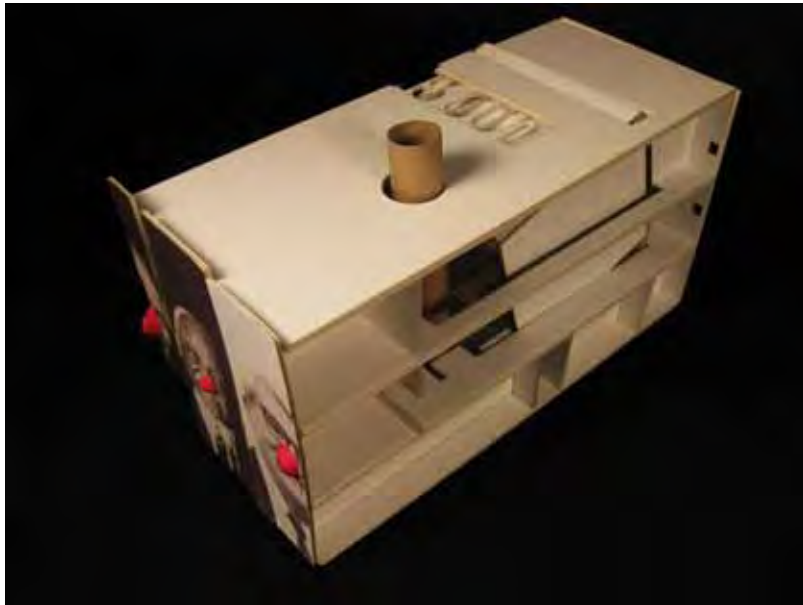


# Mid-Critique

This was a 1/4" scale model built for the midcritique which shows the center 30' of the building.







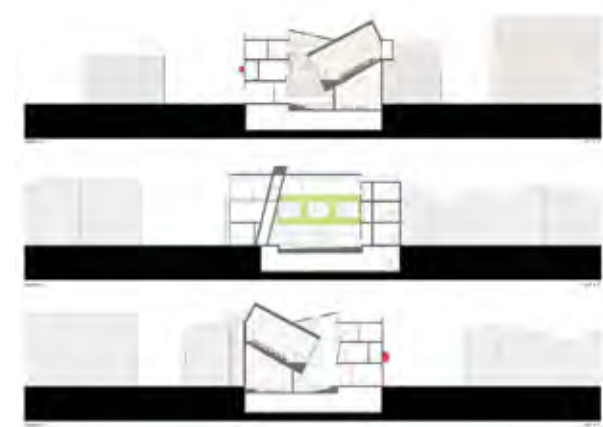
# Gate Review

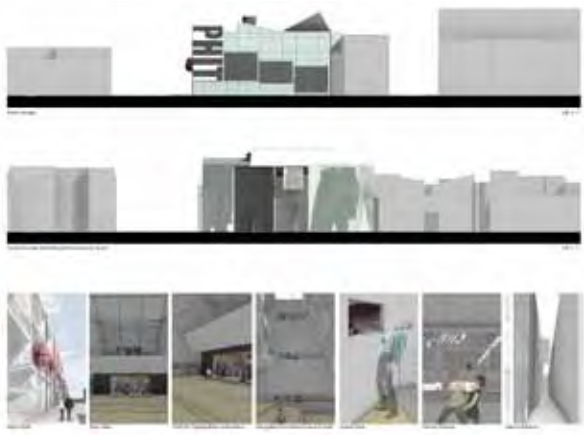
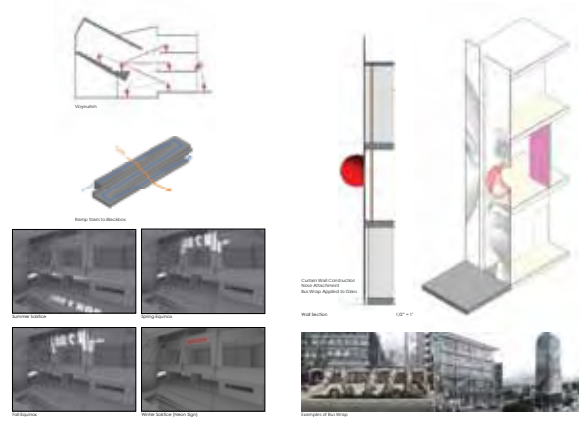
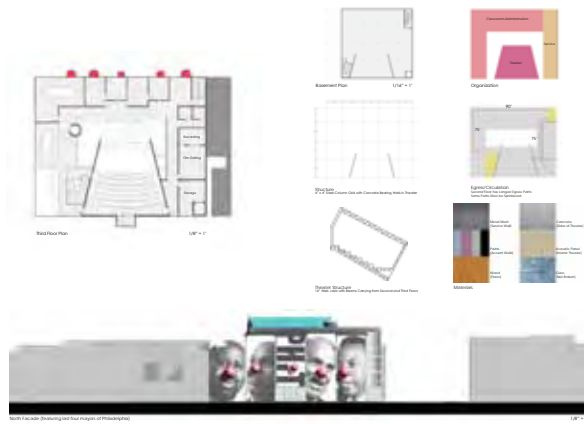
Three weeks before the final review, we were asked to make a full presentation showing every drawing and model at least started or represented. We would pin up our drawings and leave, to come back with a judgment for whether our projects are at the level that they need to be to present on time. Judgments were based on the amount of information shown and the level that the project had reached at that point, and if the project was far along enough to be finished in three weeks. Based on the level that my project had reached at the time of gate, I was allowed a pass to go on schedule, without an extension.

## LMA Laughing My Architecture Off

Architecture today is a complex, multi-layered, and often contradictory, discipline. It is a discipline that is constantly evolving, and one that is often misunderstood. The LMA project is a response to this complexity, and a way of exploring the possibilities of architecture in a new and exciting way.

In this project, we have explored the possibilities of architecture in a new and exciting way. We have explored the possibilities of architecture in a new and exciting way. We have explored the possibilities of architecture in a new and exciting way.





# Final Review: Drawings

## LMAO: Laughing My Architecture Off

by Thomas

Architectural design is the process of creating a plan for a building. It is a process that involves a lot of research and a lot of creativity. The architect must first understand the client's needs and then create a plan that meets those needs. This process is often a collaborative one, involving the architect, the client, and sometimes other professionals like engineers and interior designers.

It is an exciting process, and it is one that allows the architect to use their imagination to create something new. The architect must also be able to communicate their ideas effectively, and they must be able to work with others to bring their vision to life.



Architectural Drawing



Site Plan



Architectural Drawing



Architectural Drawing



Second Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



Section A



Section B



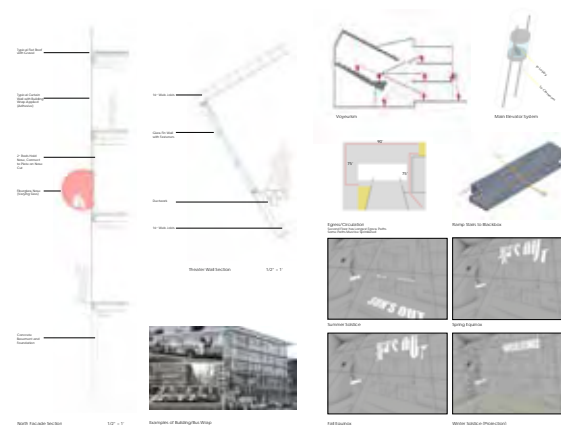
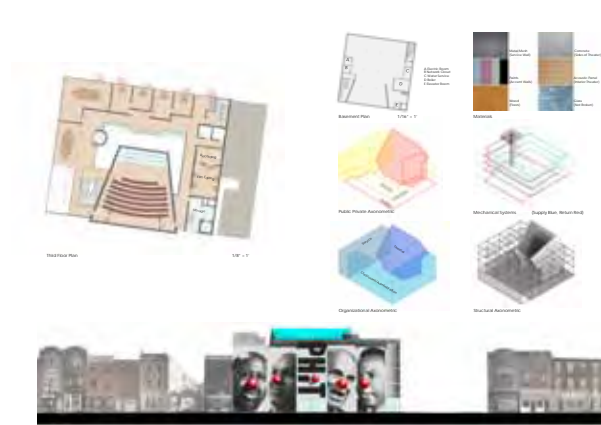
Section C



Section D

Three weeks after gate, these final boards were presented along with two models: a revised  $1/4"=1'$  bay model, and a  $1/16"=1'$  site model.





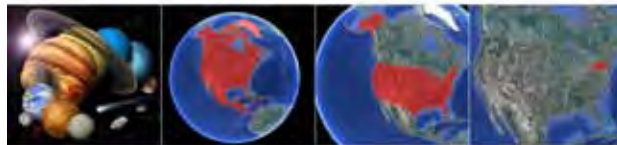
# Final Review: Drawings

## LMA : Laughing My Architecture Off

Izzy Straub

Architecture today is far too serious. If we spend all of our time in serious buildings, then we will become serious too. The best way for architecture, and for us, to lighten up is to embrace humor. Integrating humor into architecture will be a lasting way to help everyone take themselves less seriously.

In integrating humor into architecture, I have chosen to create a new facility for the Philadelphia Improv Theater, located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It is a 29,000 square foot comedy club that includes classrooms and performance spaces for stand-up, sketch, improv, and writing comedy. This particular company was chosen because they had no previous place of their own, and Philadelphia itself is a hub for comedy, though there is no proper outlet. Its location on South Street and 13th Street was chosen because South Street is a highly energetic street further east, but needs an anchor to the west.



Earth

North America

The United States

Pennsylvania



Philadelphia County

Center City

Location on South St.

South and 13th Streets



Axonometric Facing Southeast



Site Plan 1/16" = 1'

0' 5' 10' 20' 30' 50' 100'





Philadelphia Sports (Culture)



Views of South Street



Philadelphia Rowhouses



Site Photos

# Final Review: Drawings



Ground Floor Plan

1/8" = 1'



Second Floor Plan

1/8" = 1'



Section A

1/8" = 1'





Third Floor Plan

1/8" = 1'



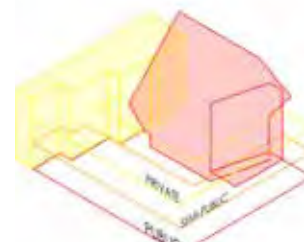
Basement Plan

1/16" = 1'

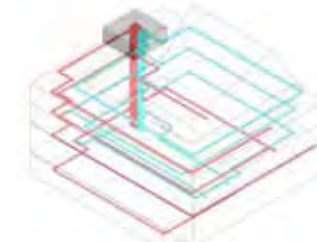
A Electric Room  
B Network Closet  
C Water Service  
D Boiler  
E Elevator Room



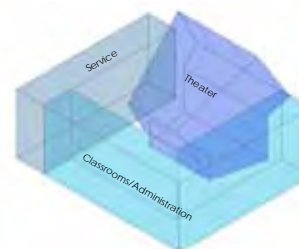
Materials



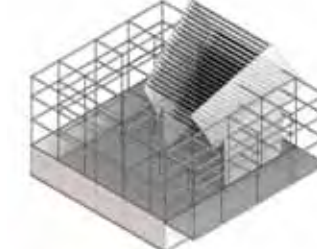
Public Private Axonometric



Mechanical Systems (Supply Blue, Return Red)



Organizational Axonometric



Structural Axonometric

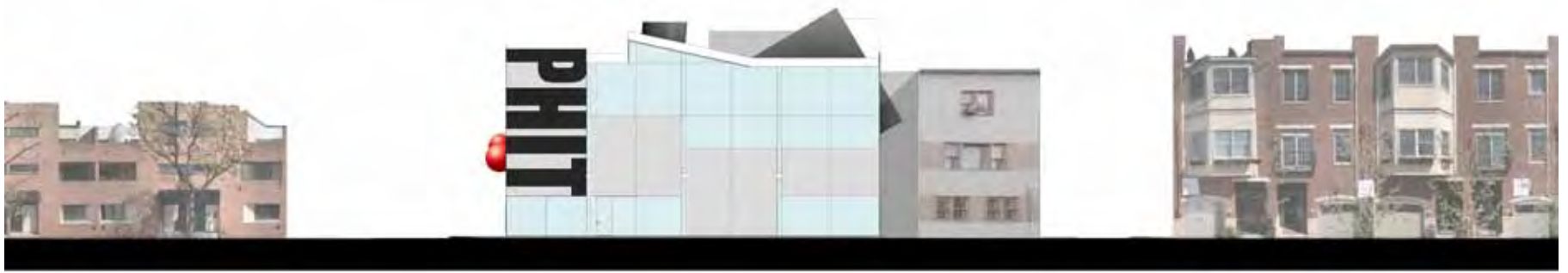


North Facade (featuring last four mayors of Philadelphia)

1/8" = 1'

# Final Review: Drawings





West Facade

1/8" = 1'



South Facade (featuring last four mayors' rears)

1/8" = 1'



WELCOME!



Entry View



Viral Film Display/Entry to Blackbox



Elongated Torso Behind Service Wall



Sneak Peak

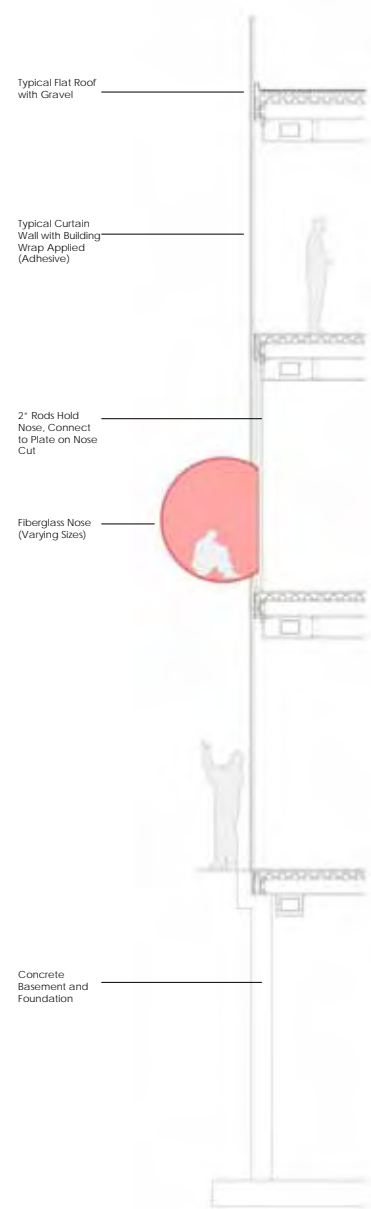


View in Theater

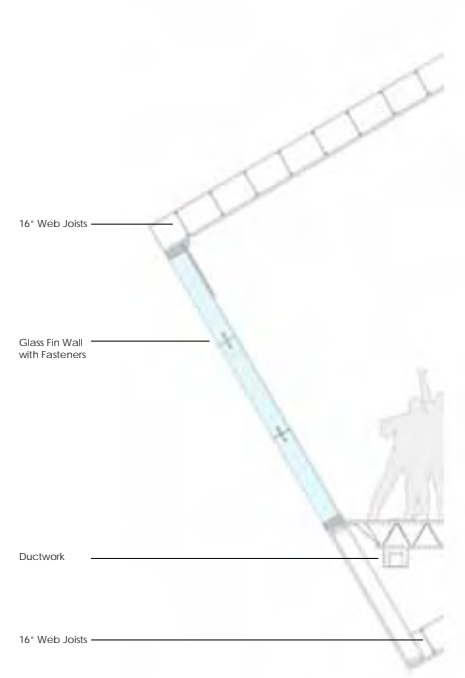


Alley of ...Behinds

# Final Review: Drawings



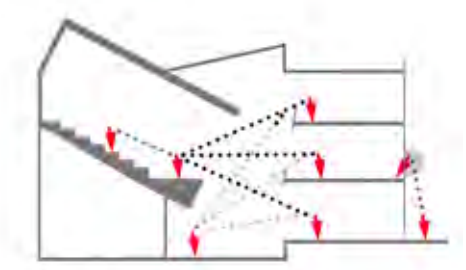
North Facade Section 1/2" = 1'



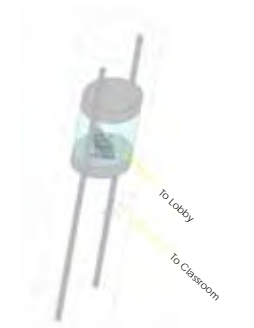
Theater Wall Section 1/2" = 1'



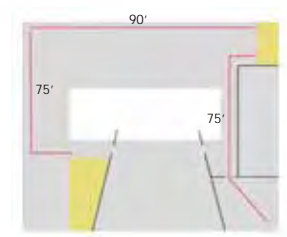
Examples of Building/Bus Wrap



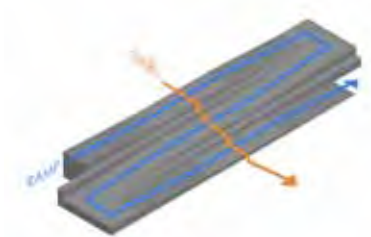
Voyeurism



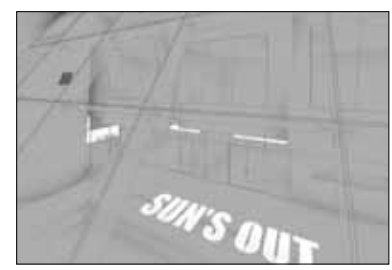
Main Elevator System



Egress/Circulation  
Second Floor has Longest Egress Paths  
Some Paths Must be Sprinklered



Ramp Stairs to Blackbox



Summer Solstice



Spring Equinox



Fall Equinox



Winter Solstice (Projection)





The monkey can wait all day.



Darth has no time to wave.



Mr. Roosevelt enjoys a stand-up performance in the blackbox.

# Final Review: Drawings



South and 13th Street, Daytime. Spiderman.



South and 13th Street, Nighttime. Batman.



The pug watches over the lobby.





Method man enjoys the views to the lobby.



Hugh Jackman approves of the main theater.



Excitement on all levels from the classroom.

# Final Review: Models

Final Bay Model at 1/14" = 1'

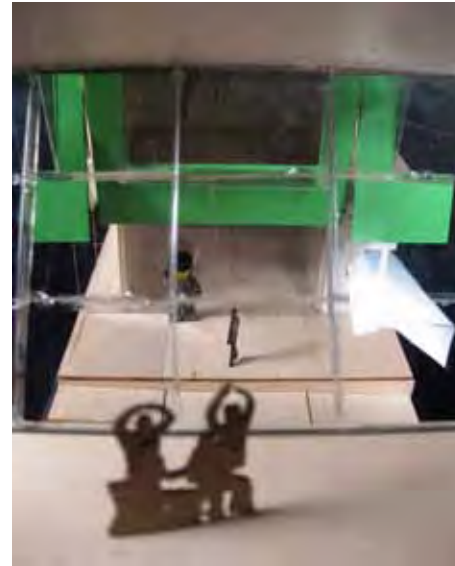


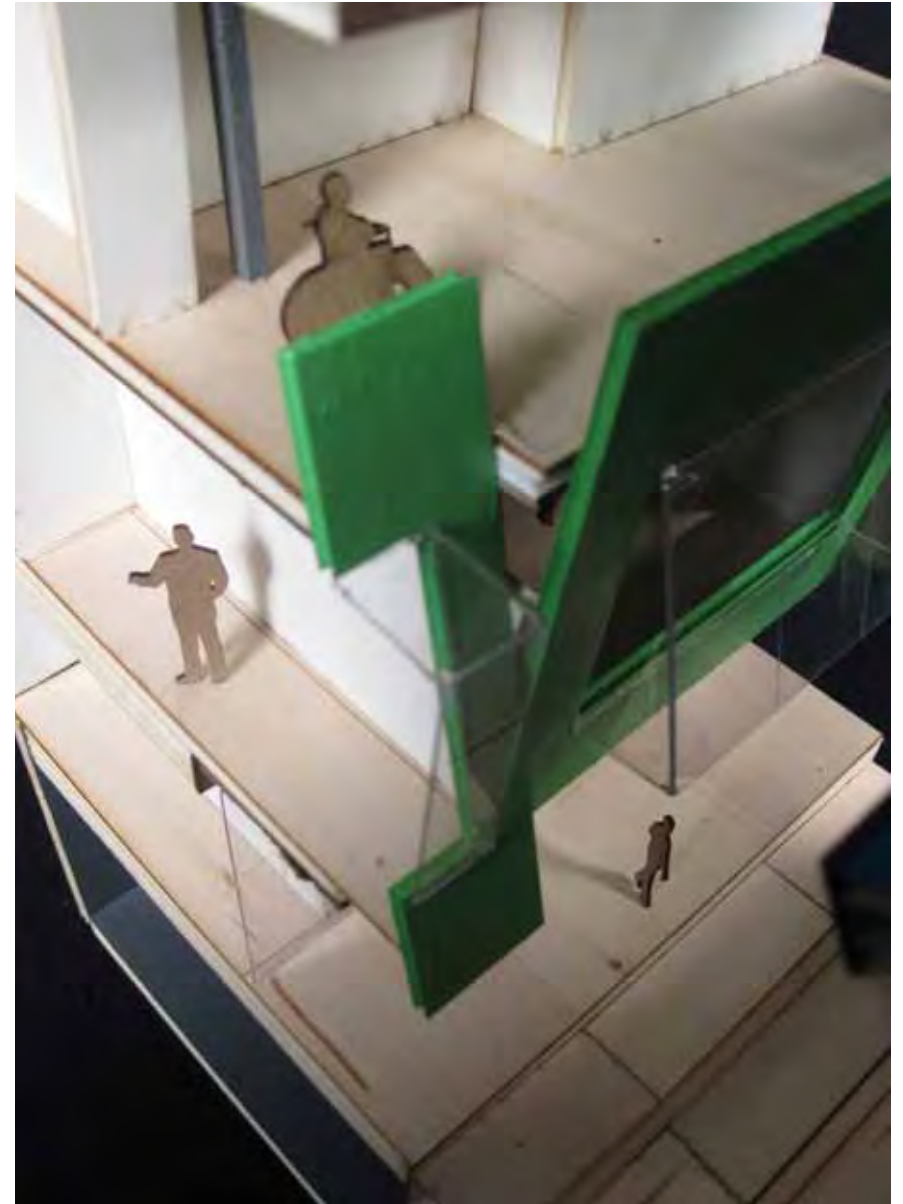




# Final Review: Models

Final Bay Model at 1/14" = 1' (Yes, those are lego people.)







# Final Review: Models

Final Site Model at  $1/16'' = 1'$ . Made of approximately 1700 legos.

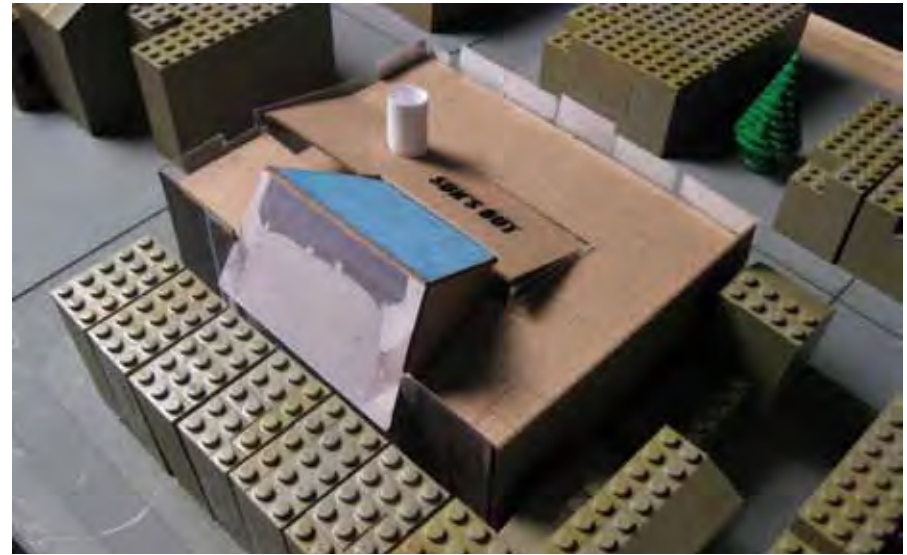






# Final Review: Models

Final Site Model at 1/16" = 1'. Made of approximately 1700 legos.











### A Final Thought

There was a quote I had heard before the design process even started. One that I now realize is extremely true and should always be kept in mind when doing a project that so strongly questions the nature of humor:

“Dissecting humor is like dissecting a frog. No one cares, and the frog dies.” - E.B. White

The frog definitely dies. Doing a project with the theme of humor is something that I initially thought would be difficult to do, but fun at the same time. There were fun moments of humor, but they were sparse in comparison to the amount of stress that comes when trying to successfully make people laugh with a building. After analyzing humor in depth, it is hard to find most things funny, at least for a period of time. It is because after thinking too hard about it, it's not funny. Jokes are meant to be to the point and are not meant to be deep and thoughtful in a serious way. It is impossible to be so serious about humor when humor is, by definition, not serious.

In conclusion, do not take humor seriously.

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